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Book Experience and Emergent Reading Behaviour in Preschool Children

University — Université
ALBERTA

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée
PH. D

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade 1981	Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse Marion D. Jenkinson

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BOOK EXPERIENCE AND EMERGENT READING BEHAVIOUR IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

by

Ⓒ DAVID BROWN DOAKE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1981

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Book Experience and Emergent Reading Behaviour in Preschool Children," submitted by David Brown Doake in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on an examination of the reading development of preschool children as it occurred in the natural settings of their homes. The major purposes of the study were to investigate the characteristics of the parents' and their children's behaviours in the typical bedtime and other book experience situations and to determine the contribution these experiences were making to the children's reading development. The appearance and the characteristics of reading-like behaviour in the children was examined in detail as was their growing knowledge of the conventions of print and their understanding of the process of reading. Their awareness of written environmental language and their progress in learning to write were also briefly studied in relation to their contributions to the reading development of the children.

The homes of four children were visited on a total of 56 occasions and during these participant observational visits 67 hours of audiotape recordings were made. The children ranged in age from 2 years 11 months to 5 years 5 months at the beginning of visits which were made over a period of approximately 7 months. All the children had been and were being read to regularly by their parents. The recordings which were made consisted primarily of the interactions that occurred between the parents and their children and the investigator and the children in book experience and in informal interview situations. On a number of occasions throughout the study a Reading Concepts Observational Scale which had

been constructed by the investigator was used in order to examine the children's growing range of understandings of the conventions of print and of some of the functions written language serves. Field notes were also recorded and the parents were asked to maintain a daily record of their observations of their children's behaviour with books and with other forms of written language activity.

All audiotape recordings were transcribed and the resulting data analyzed and interpreted. The family reading background data were obtained from interviews conducted with the parents. The data resulting from the interactions which occurred between the children and their books while in the company of their parents or the investigator were analyzed using Glaser's (1969) method of constant comparison. The category system which emerged, resulted from repeated examinations of the data and from the theory that the data was able to generate.

As a result of this study, learning to read for these children was seen to be occurring as a developmentally-based task which was being controlled, directed, and monitored by the children themselves, primarily as a result of their being read to regularly, but more particularly through being reread favourite stories repeatedly. No prior period of "reading readiness" or prerequisite level of linguistic awareness were seen as necessary for them to begin to learn to read which appeared to have started from the time they were first read to by their parents. The formation of extremely positive

attitudes towards books and reading in the children resulted in the development of a powerful inner drive to gain independent access to their favourite stories. Reading-like behaviour was seen to be the means by which they were able to reproduce the meaning of their favourite stories in approximating ways using the patterns of written language to do so. Through the use of the fluent and arhythmic dimensions of reading-like behaviour they were able to begin to gain control over the non-visual and visual aspects of print. Their growing awareness of the conventions of print and of what was involved in reading was observed to be a product of the progress that they were making in learning to read, their experiences with environmental language and their learning to write.

Implications for the theory of reading, for research in reading, for teachers and for parents were presented along with some recommendations for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of his supervisor, Dr. Marion D. Jenkinson. Her support, encouragement and helpful suggestions during the planning and implementation of the research are much appreciated. Her tolerance with its duration and her understanding of the difficulties experienced in its completion were very helpful. Appreciation is also expressed to the members of the Supervisory Committee: Dr. Grace V. Malicky for her numerous insightful comments, pertinent suggestions, and continued interest; Dr. W. Schmidt for his helpful comments concerning the observational nature of the study. The thoughtful contributions of the members of the Examining Committee Dr. P. A. McFetridge and Dr. M. P. Browne are recognized also. The continued interest which Dr. Yetta M. Goodman, my External Examiner, displayed for this research and her positive support and helpful criticism are deeply appreciated.

Without the full cooperation of the parents and the children involved in this research, it could not have been commenced or completed. The openness, hospitality and consistent generous help received from all the families concerned in the project, contributed greatly to the nature and extent of the data obtained. My deeply felt gratitude to Gillian, Jennifer, Kaaren and Sean and their parents for

allowing me to share in the warmth of their family life can never be fully expressed.

To my wife, Diana, for her loving support, for her substantial assistance in typing the numerous drafts of this research project, for her constant encouragement and understanding and to our son Raja, who unknowingly contributed to its completion, I dedicate this thesis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The process by which young children become literate has been of major interest to parents, teachers and researchers for many years. Why some children enter school and become high progress readers from the very beginning, seemingly without a great deal of help from their teachers, has been a question for which only some of the answers have been found. An even more difficult question, and one that causes far greater concern, relates to those children who are at the opposite, and much less successful, end of the scale. Why some of these children appear to be "at risk" from the start of their schooling, and find the task of learning to read inordinately difficult, despite considerable attention from their teachers, reading specialists and school psychologists, is a question for which even fewer satisfactory answers have been found, but on which an enormous amount of effort has been expended.

Of far less interest to parents, teachers and researchers but of no less importance, have been the results of those studies which have been directed at examining those children who have learned to read before going to school (Briggs and Elkind, 1973; Clark, 1976; Cohan, 1961; Durkin, 1966; Gardner, 1970; McCracken, 1966; Plessas and Oakes, 1964; Price, 1976; Torrey, 1969). A number of these children appear to have learned to read without any conscious or planned assistance from their parents or older siblings.

From an examination of the case study reports of these early readers it appears that many of them learned to read as naturally as they learned to speak. Just as in learning to speak their language, these children seemingly, were not aware that they were learning to read their language. Even more significantly, in some cases, the investigators reported that the parents did not know that their children had in fact learned to read and were surprised when they, at some stage, demonstrated their skill to do so (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966; Torrey, 1969).

The outstanding characteristic of children who learned to read before going to school and those who rapidly became high progress readers once they entered school has been that they have almost always come from book-oriented homes and have been read to constantly from a very early age during their preschool years. But apart from reporting this information and noting its apparent relationship with success in learning to read, the few researchers who have studied children's early reading development, have not examined why or how extensive experience with books in the form of the typical bedtime story situation should be the source of such a powerful influence on learning to read. Only Holdaway (1979) and to a lesser extent Clay (1972) and Clark (1976) have sought to determine in any depth, why and how these book experiences have provided the opportunity for young children to begin to direct and regulate their own learning to read strategies. Gardner (1970), as a result of his study of 25 early readers, was critical of this situation:

> Unfortunately we know very little about the precise way in which advantaged pupils are prepared for reading by the natural events of their day-to-day life. We make general assumptions that are covered by such imprecise guides as "They have a rich language background;" "They are told stories;" "They are read to by their parents;" "They have stimulating experiences."
> There is need to examine with more precision the home regime that produces a child who, at the age of five, is well on the way to becoming a reader. (p. 18)

Although there are some signs that this situation is changing, there are still very few reports in the literature that have been based on the observation of preschool children interacting with written language in a variety of ways. Usually what has been recorded has been of the case study type, where a parent has documented the literacy development of her own child (Bissex, 1979; Rhodes, 1979).

The experiences which contribute to early reading development of children who come from book oriented homes, the processes involved in learning to read in the naturalistic setting of the home, and the degree of linguistic awareness needed to learn to read, all require careful examination. The primary focus of this study is to conduct such an examination using the research techniques of the ethnographer on a longitudinal basis.

Need for the Study

Most of the research that has been conducted for the purpose of determining how children learn to read, has been directed at examining the processes involved as they relate to some pre-determined method of instruction. The previous research has not focused on the processes by which children have learned or have begun to learn to read, without any specific instruction. Even those researchers who have studied early readers have not attempted to discover how these children learned to read through their own self-directed efforts. Those who examined these children have usually reported only the conditions and circumstances which seemed to provide the opportunity for this learning to take place. They have not been able to determine how or why it occurred because all the studies have been retrospective in nature.

This study was prompted by the need for a detailed investigation of the processes involved in children learning to use written language in various ways as a product of their own self-directed efforts. More specifically, it was stimulated by the need to examine what it was in book experience situations in children's homes, that seemed to provide them with the interest, need and opportunity, to begin to learn to read in the real sense of the word. Why, for example, might these children who had extensive experience with books during their preschool years, be much more likely to become high progress and possibly avid readers, while children who did not have these experiences, are much more at risk in learning to read? Why, when children are read favourite stories repeatedly, do they often develop characteristic reading-like behaviour and how do they go about learning to do this? Even more importantly, what role does this reading-like behaviour play in the children's reading program?

From a learning to read point of view, a number of questions and issues appear pertinent to this analysis which, as yet, have remained largely unanswered and unresolved. Is learning to read a genuine language learning process that can start very early in children's lives, from when they are first introduced to written language through the bedtime story situation or is it a secondary or derived task, dependent on their oral language development and on specific instruction? Is there, in fact, a period of "reading readiness" where children need to be prepared to learn to read, or is this term misleading because it directs us away from the true nature, value and significance of the learning that occurs when children are interacting with their books and written language of various kinds during their preschool years?

In addition, since so many claims are being made concerning the importance of linguistic awareness and its relationship to learning to read, the dimensions and relevance of this concept need to be examined through children engaged in the process of becoming literate. What, for example, is the linguistic knowledge and understanding that children need to have with regard to written language and the process of reading in order to be able to learn to read and how and when does this develop? Do the children have to possess this knowledge and understanding at an explicit or conscious level or can it (or some of it) remain at the implicit "out-of-awareness" level as it does with oral language usage? And if there is an identifiable range of linguistic behaviours that are important to learning to read, which of these seem to be the most significant in facilitating children's progress in learning to read? Is there an order for their development and if so, what is this order?

Oral language development is stimulated in children through their immersion in it being used in various ways. It was felt that there was a need to examine the range of experiences children have which gives them access to written language being used, that would provide them with a similar dimension of immersion. What is the extent and nature of the experience with the story reading situation necessary for the children to develop an inner drive to master reading for themselves? What is the role of their attitudes towards books and reading in the development of this inner drive? How does the language of television and the environment contribute to the development of emergent reading behaviours? What role do their attempts to produce written language play in their reading development.

To date, few studies of an ethnographic nature have been undertaken in the naturalistic setting of the home in order to investigate the true nature of the early reading development of young children. There is a real need for a detailed study employing observational techniques which will contribute to a more complete understanding of children's reading development.

Purposes of the Study

In order to answer some of the questions raised in the previous section, this study was designed with four major purposes in mind. The first was to observe and record on a regular basis, preschool children being read to by one of their parents in the naturalistic setting of their home. More specifically, the study examined: the nature of the interaction between the children, their parents and books during this shared book experience; the attitudes of the participants towards reading together; the attentional behaviour of the children during the reading; the effect of the parent's style of reading on the shared nature of the experience; and the manner in which this experience contributed to the children's emergent reading behaviour.

The second purpose of the study was to investigate the effect on the children of being read and re-read their favourite stories. The study examined in some detail, any reading-like behaviour that appeared as a result of repeated reading and explored the role and contribution of reading-like behaviour to the children's reading development.

The third purpose was to determine what the children were learning about the functions and forms of written language from their diverse experiences with written language. Through participant observation, and through the administration of questionnaires and a Reading Concepts Observation Scale, detailed information was sought concerning the previous book and reading experiences of the family, the children's understanding of the process of reading, their knowledge of the conventions of print, and their interest in and attitudes towards books and reading.

Finally, the ability of these children to direct, regulate, monitor and modify their own learning to read strategies was examined to determine if the strategies they used bore any resemblance to those used by children engaged in the process of learning oral language.

Research Problems

In this study four general questions were formulated to be investigated.

1. What are the characteristics of the parents' and their children's behaviours in the shared book experience situation and how do these behaviours relate to the reading development of the children?
2. What are the characteristics of reading-like behaviour as it occurs in preschool children and what contribution does this behaviour make to their reading development?
3. What is the nature and extent of the relationship between the principles which function to govern oral language learning and those which govern learning to read?
4. What are the roles of environmental language and of learning to write in the reading development of preschool children?

Significance of the Study

Since the linguists have succesfully used longitudinal naturalistic observational studies to learn how preschool children master the complex processes involved in understanding and producing oral language, it seems logical to assume that the same techniques could provide an equally valuable source of information concerning how preschool children master the processes involved in learning about written language. The continuing use of observation in its various forms has formed the cornerstone for the linguists to construct a generally agreed on and well documented theory of oral language development. It is probably no accident that the researchers in the field of reading are still far from reaching any similar agreement about how young children go about the process of learning to read, since remarkably few studies in reading development have utilized direct observation of children engaged in the process of learning to deal with written language in the naturalistic settings of their homes. It is hoped that this study will be the start of a series of investigations, which will use the techniques so successfully employed by the linguists, in order that a generally agreed on theory of how young children learn to read, may be developed. By so doing, it should be possible to reduce the present uncertainty and continuing polarization of opinion concerning how reading should be learned and taught during the early years of children's lives.

Although the linguists have never claimed that children have to go through a period of readiness before they can begin to learn to speak and listen to their language, the same has not been true for learning to read. The preschool years of children's lives have traditionally not been seen as a time when learning to read can begin. Only when they enter school are children made 'ready for reading' and parents have usually been advised to avoid doing anything, other than read to their children, to help their children learn to read.

If the results of this study demonstrate that children's reading begins to develop from the time they are first read to, and that through continued participation in shared reading experience, they not only learn a great deal about written language and reading in particular, but commence to initiate, direct and regulate their own learning to read strategies, a radical change would be necessary with regard to the role of the home in facilitating the development of children's reading. Instead of the teaching of reading remaining the responsibility of the school, the process of the children learning to read would become a shared responsibility. If shared book experiences in the home proved to be critically important in the development of the children's reading, parents could be informed of the specific benefits of reading to their children, how they might do it, and what kinds of materials would be most suitable.

Apart from the subsequent influence on the role that the home would play in providing conditions for children to begin to learn to read, the concept and application of 'reading readiness' as it is currently used in schools may need to be re-examined. If the bedtime story situation, the repetitive reading of favourite stories and the subsequent appearance of reading-like behaviour were seen to provide children with the opportunity to begin to self-direct their own learning in reading and to enjoy the process of doing so, then these elements could become integral parts of the initial reading programmes employed by teachers.

Much of the reading instruction children receive when they enter school tends, as Goodman and Goodman (1977) suggest, ". . . to ignore or underestimate the linguistic competence and language capabilities of children learning to read" (p. 323). If the results of this study demonstrate that preschool children can and do make progress in learning to deal with written language, then a new perspective of children as efficient learners of written as well as oral language learners, may have to be developed by teachers.

Finally the inadequacies of the current crop of reading readiness tests in providing teachers with information concerning children's reading development, have been well-documented by several studies (Coltheart, 1979; Nurss, 1979; Rude, 1973). The basing of instructional programmes solely on the items comprising these tests is still too prevalent. The reading concepts diagnostic instrument which has been constructed to be used during this study could prove to be useful in determining where the children are in their progress in learning to read and in their knowledge of what is involved in the process of reading. Should this instrument demonstrate its suitability for this purpose, it could form the basis for the development of an observational tool which would aid teachers more satisfactorily in, as Wanat (1976) recommends, "the progress of gauging the match between the learner characteristics and task characteristics" (p. 103).

For many years, parents have been exhorted to read to their children with little explanation as to why and how they should do this. Perhaps as a result of this study, the reasons for this exhortation may be made more explicit. Learning to read could become a process in which the parents, the teachers and the children share and "learning to read by reading" could become more of a reality.

Definitions

In this study the following definitions of major terms were used:

Bedtime Story: Used synonymously with "shared book experience" and refers to any occasion when a child is read to in the home.

Book Oriented Homes: Homes where there is a plentiful supply of books and where members of the family read regularly to themselves and to the children in the homes.

Conventions of Print: The range of concepts concerning printed language: that a story comes fron the print and not the pictures and that the print does not change from day to day; that a book has a front, a back, a title, a beginning and an end; that the print follows certain directional conventions of left to right across the page, that it moves from the top of the page to the bottom, that the left page comes before the right page, that the story begins when the print begins; that words are separated by spaces and are composed of letters; that letters have names and that the same letter may be written in upper and lower case, and in different print styles; that print uses different forms of punctuation; that letters have some relationship to speech sounds; that the same word always has the same spelling. (Holdaway, 1979, p. 62)

Emergent Reading Behaviour: Includes a developing knowledge of all the concepts listed under "conventions of print" along with the extensive range of strategies used in "reading-like behaviour," and children's developing interest in books and reading.

Eye-Ear-Voice Matching: The technique of pointing to the words on the page with the voice and not the finger, "Reading" in a word-by-word manner but retaining intonation and without any great loss of syntactic and semantic cohesion of the material.

Linguistic Awareness: Also referred to as "metalinguistic awareness" by Cazden (1975) and defined as "the ability to make language forms opaque and attend to them in and for themselves" (p. 4). In its widest sense it can be seen "as an appreciation that the stream of speech (and written language) can be looked at and taken apart" (Francis, 1979, p. 5).

Naturalistic Setting: A situation in which few controls or manipulation are exercised. "The subject is observed doing what comes naturally, in the natural environment" (Irwin and Bushnell, 1980, p. 37).

Participant Observation: The process whereby the observer takes an active role by participating in the occurrence of the behaviour being observed without playing a specific role in influencing its direction, and records by whatever means are appropriate, all the details of the activity and interactions which take place.

Reading-like Behaviour: Also referred to as 'reading.' The practice of simulating the process of reading by reproducing a story or part of a story without reference to the print.

'Reading Miscue': This occurs when an observed response during oral 'reading' does not match the expected response.

Reading Readiness: Seen by Nurss (1979) as "an assessment of the child's skills necessary for success in beginning reading, taking into account the particular method and materials to be used for instruction" (p. 32).

Successive Approximations: The process of producing language, either written or spoken, in a series of stages that come closer and closer to an accurate and acceptable form of that language.

Other major terms used during the study have been defined in context.

Outline of the Study

This chapter has established the context and the direction of the research. The study examines the early reading development of preschool children within the naturalistic setting of their homes. The need for and the major purposes of the study, its significance, and the definitions of the terms used were presented.

The initial section of Chapter II briefly examines some of the major philosophical principles which underly the research approach which was used in this study. A review of some of the related literature and research follows under the headings of: book experience and learning to read; attitudes, attention, motivation and early book experience; reading-like behaviour; linguistic awareness and learning to read, and; learning oral and written language.

In Chapter III the research design is described, the details of the children and their parents are provided, the specific problems, assumptions and limitations related to the study are outlined and the data and data sources are detailed. The research methodology used, the various phases of the study, and the data analysis and reporting procedures are commented on, along with a discussion of the questions of validity and reliability.

In Chapter IV the data relating to the family backgrounds and the reading environments of the children are reported and discussed. In Chapter V a similar procedure was followed with the data related to the children's concepts about books, print and reading. Chapter VI examines the data specifically related to reading-like behaviour, the development of this behaviour, its characteristics and its relationship to the children's interest in and attitudes towards reading and learning to read.

Chapter VII contains a concluding discussion, implications, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter has two main purposes. The first is to examine some of the literature related to the mode of inquiry used for this study and to investigate more carefully, the reasons for selecting naturalistic observations and ethnographic interviews as the major means of collecting the data for analysis and interpretation. The second purpose is to review the literature and research which appears to be related specifically to the study under the headings of: book experience and learning to read; attitudes, attention and motivation; reading-like behaviour; linguistic awareness and learning to read, and; learning oral and written language.

Ethnography and Research in Reading

In their final editorial for the tenth volume of the Reading Research Quarterly, Farr and Weintraub (1974-75), commented favourably on the "well-designed, carefully executed and precisely documented studies related to reading" conducted by researchers in the field of reading. They were, however, also forcefully critical of these researchers on a number of grounds. These writers were disconcerted for example, at finding through their extensive reviewing of the research literature that many of the studies published year after year were, as they stated:

> ... both myopic and narrow in scope and fail[ed] to address themselves to the most important issues and concerns related to understanding the reading process - the teaching of reading and the field of reading in general. (No page number available in the original).

Farr and Weintraub accuse researchers in the field of reading of being "methodologically incarcerated" and see this as a result of the adherence of these researchers to traditionally acceptable concepts "of how a study should be designed as well as those which dictate what research is." Doctoral students for example, they claim, are directed to take courses in research design which concentrate on "statistically neat and clean" investigations which can be conducted over a short period of time, by one researcher working alone. Because of its use of sophisticated statistical techniques and elaborate design, the study and its results may ultimately be acceptable to any of the educational research journals for publication purposes, due to the premium the editors of these journals place on criteria of this nature. In these 'one shot' experiments, Farr and Weintraub claim:

> Design aspects of the study become the primary concern and thus the tail wags the dog. Doctoral

> students become victims of methodological incarceration, and they carry it on to the next generation of students.

The rigorous control of variables and tight statistical design that has been demanded of so much of the research conducted in the field of psychology and education, has been characteristic of the research in reading, as well, to the point where it would appear to be having a deleterious effect on both the scope and the nature of the research being conducted. Farr and Weintraub are again highly critical of circumstances which cause this to happen.

> It seems absurd to accept the notion that a field of study is not able to investigate important questions because the methodology that is generally held acceptable is not able to cope with such questions. Perhaps more alarming is that most of the available designs are based on the notion that the researcher knows what he is looking for and indeed he is forced to explicitly define variables and their relationships before he begins to collect his data. The researcher is forced into the strategy of studying what fits into current statistical techniques rather than what the important issues are.

Four decades ago Susan Isaacs (1930) sounded a note of warning for those researchers, who unlike her, were aiming to control as rigorously as possible, the focus of their investigations. She observed that:

> By looking for particular answers to particular questions, we run the risk of missing other perhaps more significant facts which might transform our problem and make our previous questions idle. (p. 3)

Challenges as to the value of the experimental method have been growing in other social sciences as well as in reading. McCall (1977) was critical of the effects of its widespread use in the field of psychology. Although he sees it as having served general psychology well in the past and would not want to see it excluded completely from use in that discipline in the future, he expressed similar views to those held by Farr and Weintraub as to the dangers present in its continued dominance on the design of research. He observed that:

> ... the experimental method now dictates rather than serves the research questions we value, fund, and pursue; as a result the process of development as it naturally transpires in children growing up in actual life circumstances has been largely ignored. ... Bronfenbrenner (1974), for example, has charged that our discipline is the science of the influence of one strange environmental factor or one strange person on one isolated behaviour of a single child placed in a largely artificial context. (p. 334)

Similarly, the noted ethologist, Konrad Lorenz (1975), in examining the problems facing research in the human sciences, deplored the ever-growing emphasis on the quantitative aspects of studies being conducted in that field with the associated down-grading of the values of the more qualitative descriptions of behaviour. He commented: "I am convinced that approaching the urgent problems of humanity by quantifying methods alone (his emphasis) is just plain stupid" (p. 177).

The efforts of researchers in the field of education to legitimize their inquiry in an attempt to achieve at least equal status with research in other fields, probably led to the initial demand for technical excellence in the studies being conducted. This factor, coupled with those previously mentioned, seems to have caused those engaged in investigating the variables related to the reading process and learning to read, to believe in the experimental method implicitly. Although Wolf and Tymitz (1976-77), in their editorial for the Reading Research Quarterly saw the outcome of the effects of this, they also felt that there were some signs of change in the orientation of researchers. They believed that:

> ... inquirers in education were unduly sanguine about the potential of experimental and quasi-experimental inquiry and are only now beginning to realize how restrictive, esoteric, and paralyzing the measurement of behavioural research paradigm is. (No page number available).

Wolf and Tymitz pointed to the beginnings of this much needed change in the case study work of Strang (1942) and Robinson (1946), and in the use of the introspective interview techniques and protocol analysis in the study of reading comprehension by such people as Swain (1953), Jenkinson (1957) and more recently Olshavsky (1976-1977). They saw these advancements however, "more as a function of the idiosyncratic interests or concerns of the researchers themselves," rather than something that represented "a sustained, systematic attempt to view the field with an alternative informing paradigm."

Farr and Weintraub (1974-75) also saw this need for "an alternative informing paradigm" that would "allow the researcher to study phenomena in the natural setting for the inquiry" and they suggested that studies should be commenced "with a presumption of ignorance" rather than attempting to first determine what the issues are. They believe, that in the field of research in reading:

> We are sorely in need of research designs and new approaches that allow variables to emerge from the situation being studied, that admit to a lack of answers and even to the lack of questions, that allow for study in a natural setting, and that provide for the researchers' biases as well as alternative interpretations. Such inquiry approaches are available in other disciplines... Reading researchers need to identify and explore these alternative methodologies.

In the area of developmental psychology in general, McCall (1977) recommends that researchers "should accord description the esteem other disciplines do because much has been learned at its hand" (p. 337). He suggests that they would do well to "look into (their) own backyard at Jean Piaget to observe the impact detailed naturalistic description can have on a discipline even when the maximum number of subjects is only three" (p. 337).

As a result of their careful examination of the direction and emphasis of research in the field of human development Irwin and Bushnell (1980) concluded that although naturalistic research "has been 'out of favour,' and taking second place to experimental research and then third place as tests and

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measurements became increasingly popular," the last decade, they believe, "has seen a resurgence of interest in naturalistic research" (p. 257). They saw the reasons for this "resurgence of interest" originating from several sources: the influence of the productive observational work of man's behaviour of the ethologists; the growing popularity of the ecological approach, particularly in the observational studies of classroom behaviour and classroom interaction; and the renewed interest in the study of preschool children because of the downward extension of education and the fact that the application of laboratory techniques would not work in experiments with very young children. Irwin and Bushnell also saw the ready use of portable video and audio recording techniques, the ability of the computer to deal more easily with the masses of data that are generated by this type of research and the fact that permission to conduct 'natural' rather than 'engineered' research is more easily obtained from parents, as additional reasons for naturalistic observation being "an idea whose time has come - again" (p. 258).

Wolf and Tymitz (1976-77) believe that the ethnographic paradigm offers the most promise at the moment for the future of reading research. In discussing the uses of this approach in educational research, Wilson (1977) points out that this mode of inquiry requires that the researcher learn the meaning structures which determine the individual's behaviour. He believes that this can be achieved by the researcher experiencing and interpreting the particular dimensions of the behaviour partly from the perspective of the participant and partly from the perspective of an external observer. He states that, in this type of research "the researcher must develop a dynamic tension between the subjective role of the participant and the role of the observer so that he is neither one entirely" (p. 250).

In conducting an ethnographic-type study then, part of the researcher's time is spent in direct, but impartial observation. As O'Gorman (1972) suggests, researchers have to:

> Sit down now and then and watch children, write down what you [they] see, bring it home and think about what you [they] have seen. A teacher will learn about children by watching them first of all; not by reading about them or talking to experts about them. (pp. 6-7)

But as well as this, the researcher has to become a participant observer and interact with the children as they are involved in the particular experience which is the focus of the study. By using Piaget's clinical method of asking the children what they are thinking and why, and continuing to probe the depth of their understanding of what they are doing by additional questions, further insights may be gained of their development in the area under study.

Given the purpose and direction of this investigation a descriptive and interpretive study as described generally by Farr and Weintraub (1974-75), Wolf and Tymitz (1975-76) and Wilson (1977) seemed to be the appropriate one to adopt. The setting for the observation of the development of children's emergent reading behaviour was the naturalistic one of the home. By describing and by seeking to interpret and analyze their actions and interactions with written language in a range of situations, it was hoped that some of "the most important issues and concerns related to understanding the reading process" might be examined.

Book Experience and Learning to Read

Before they begin formal schooling, most children make considerable progress in acquiring a language system which is more or less complete, with its own rule-governed grammar. "Gradually, by some process of making successive approximations, the child's language becomes more and more like the language ascribed in traditional grammars to those which speak the language 'properly'" (Wardaugh, 1971, p. 160). Strongly motivated by the need to understand and be understood, they make appropriate adjustments to their grammatical and phonological systems continuously, assisted by feedback received through constant interaction with skilled users of their language.

Through being immersed in language being used and through striving to use it themselves preschool children build "an impressive and even precocious repertoire of utterances and become able to both understand and produce language (that in some cases) they have never heard before" (Goodman and Goodman, 1978, p. 1). It appears however, that it is not so much the quantity of the interaction and immersion which influences the assimilative and generative language processes, but the quality. In commenting on this aspect of the children's oral language learning, McKenzie (1976) observes that:

> Responses are real and pertinent to the communication; information is immediate to the situation at the optimal moment. In this immediate, personal situation, the child is best able to assimilate a wider range of samples into his developing schemes [sic. schemas]. (p. 48)

If the acquisition of literacy is, as Goodman and Goodman (1978) suggest, "an extension of natural language learning for all [their emphasis] children" (p. 2), questions must be asked as to the conditions and circumstances whereby this could happen.

In today's world children begin to encounter written language long before they personally experience a need to communicate beyond face-to-face situations. Mason (1980), in discussing how reading can be initiated in young children comments that:

> When they live in a clearly-labeled sign-laden environment with helpful adults, it is relatively easy for them to learn to identify and remember stop signs, names of stores that they visit, their own name, ... and labels on packages of food that they eat. (p. 221)

Goodman, Y. (1980), another researcher who has been investigating the role of environmental language in the development of literacy in young children, sees this type of written language playing an even more important role. She writes:

> The environment of three and four year olds in many places in the world is filled with the settings, signs and implements of a print oriented society...
> A society in which literacy plays such a strong role that many young children, years prior to the introduction of formal instruction in written language, are beginning to discover how print is organized and how it is used by the members of their society. They begin to act on the literate forms in their environment in the same manner in which they act on the rest of their environment. In responding to, interacting with and organizing the written language in their daily world, they begin to understand:
> 1) the significance of written language;
> 2) the oral labels used when referring to written language;
> 3) the purposes writing serves for people of different socio-economic status; and
> 4) the variety of forms used to construct the meanings communicated by written language.
>
> It is in these interactions between the learner and his or her world that we must look for the origins of literacy. (p. 2)

While the language of the environment undoubtedly plays an important role in the preschool children's experience with written language being used functionally in high contextualized settings, it would seem that "the origins of literacy" may lie for many children, in their experience with books through the traditional bedtime story situation. For those less fortunate children who do not grow up in book-oriented homes, the language of the environment may well serve the purposes which Goodman enumerates. Torrey's (1969) study of an early reader who seems to have learned to read primarily through the medium of watching television commercials, would appear to provide an example of how children can use any source of written language from which to learn literacy skills.

Constant reference has been made in the literature over many years to the values of the child being read to from a very early age. Huey (1908), in commenting on the young child learning to read as naturally as he or she learned to speak, points out that "The secret of it all lies in parents reading aloud to and with the child" (p. 332). More recently The Bullock Report (1975) recommended that "The best way to prepare the very young child for reading is to hold him on your lap and read aloud to him stories that he likes to hear over and over again" and that parents "should cradle the child with words" (p. 249). As a result of a survey made of the opinions of first grade teachers concerning the influence of the home environment on children in their classrooms learning to read, Gallup International (1969b) reported that "being read to regularly from the age of two on is a feature that distinguishes between successful and unsuccessful first graders" (p. 6). By examining characteristics and experiences of 72 children who learned to read easily, Keshian (1963) found that "All the children were read to by their parents on a regular sustained basis, throughout their early childhood" (p. 616) and all 49 children in Durkin's study of early readers, had been provided with a similar experience during their preschool years.

There is no shortage of studies which have reported a positive relationship between children being read to during their preschool years and their success in learning to read. Teale (1978) noted that, "Of all the facets of the environment mentioned in the studies of early reading, reading to children is probably the most cited" (p. 928). Like Durkin (1966), he found that the most frequently referred to activity in these children's preschool experience was being read to by one or both of the parents, and/or by older siblings. Apart from noting this consistent relationship however, most of the researchers have not examined the specific features of this activity in an attempt to determine why and how it seems to contribute to the ease with which some children learn to read. As Clark (1976) points out, they tend to note only the more generalized outcomes of this activity:

> The motivational aspects are frequently stressed and the need for parents and teachers, by reading to children, to make them aware of the enjoyment from books, and so stimulate them to wish to learn to read from themselves. (p. 5)

If the process of reading involves the reader, as the psycholinguists such as Goodman (1976) and Smith (1978) claim, in constantly predicting what is coming next on the page on the basis of "what must make sense" and "what sounds like language," it would seem that the greater the reader's familiarity with the more complex patterns of written language, the more skillful he or she would be at this process of predicting.

Whereas Clark (1976) recognizes the importance of children becoming familiar with the structure of written language at the syntactical level through being read to, Applebee (1979), drawing on the work of those researchers such as Anderson (1977) and Inhelder and Piaget (1958), sees children's early experiences in listening to a variety of stories as playing a vital role in their developing a system of schemata for these stories. The term "schema" he defines as "a mental codification of particular aspects of experience" (p. 641). As a result of his detailed analysis of children's "concept of story," Applebee (1979) was led to conclude that not only do children's existing schemata for stories guide their reaction to literature, but "the extent that literature has any effect or influence upon the child(ren), ... is in terms of changes in schemata," since a schema functions "as a kind of archive of past experience" (p. 641). As such, Applebee claims that the children's schemata for stories, provides them with a set of expectations as to what will come next in the story they are listening to or reading for themselves.

Children's ability to build schemata for stories can be reflected in their own telling and retelling of their stories. Applebee (1979) found that even by the age of two years, children's stories contained, on the average, "some thirty words, two characters, and three separate actions or incidents" (p. 642). The stories of these two-year-olds almost invariably were set within the environment of the home "and involved actions that would be directly familiar to the young child" (p. 642). An examination of stories told by five-year-olds however, revealed that theirs were on the average three times longer, contained twice as many characters and incidents and only only one third of them remained in the setting of the home. Whereas nearly all the actions described by the two-year-olds had been within their own range of experiences, only seven percent of the five-year-olds' actions could be described as being fully realistic in that sense. Applebee concluded that:

> The stories children hear and tell grow more complex with age, on virtually any dimension you wish to measure, grammatical complexity, number of words, characters, events, settings, subplots, and distance from the child's world of immediate experience. (p. 642)

But not only do children learn to deal with increasing degrees of complexity in their stories and demonstrate an ability to construct their own using their existing schema to do so, they also begin to exhibit mastery over a series of techniques and conventions of literary form. Applebee

(1979) was able to demonstrate for example, that:

> ... it is possible to show that even very young children, as young as 2, have begun to differentiate storytelling from other language functions. They develop a special pitch or tone of voice when telling a story, make use of conventional openings, and gradually assimilate stereotypical story characters - the wicked witch, brave lion, and sly fox which are part of the heritage of Western literature. (p. 643)

Through listening to a great variety of stories, some read to them over and over again, it would seem that children's constantly developing story schema as a result of this experience, would provide them a range of expectations as to what any particular story will be like. They learn very early in their lives that stories have a clearly defined beginning, and ending and that the resolution of the action is usually achieved in a satisfactory manner. They develop, as Applebee suggests "a set of conventional characters and situations which provide a kind of story short-hand for dealing with complex notions of wickedness and deceit" (p. 644). It would appear that this growing 'sense of story' would establish a firm foundation for children's ability to interact with a story more effectively through the processes of anticipation and prediction and, eventually when they come to read narrative material for themselves, to know when they were making sense or not, as they read.

As well as providing young children with the opportunity to become familiar with the structure of stories and with the written language from which they are composed, reading to children may provide them with an avenue through which they may learn to read in very much the same way as they learn to use the oral dimensions of their language. Carroll (1966) for example, saw in the regular, story reading experience, a situation where this could possibly occur:

> ... the child who is frequently read to while he follows the line of print with his eyes is in effect being presented with an experience which is not unlike the situation in which he learned his native language. The similarity consists in the fact that the child is constantly and successively being presented with a full variety of language stimuli, spoken utterances and their referents in one case, and printed words and their spoken counterparts in the other. The language learner picks out those spoken language elements that he can handle at any particular stage, and likewise, the beginning reader picks out those printed language stimuli that he can interpret at any given stage. (p. 578)

Although the validity of Carroll's hypothesizing, is dependent upon whether or not the child has developed an understanding of the fact that the story being read is actually contained in the print on the paper, and whether or not a range of directionality and word matching skills have been mastered, his observations outline some important and necessary principles for written language learning. In the book experience situation, such as that described by Carroll, children are able to operate on whole, meaningful language and are free to regulate and direct their own learning from a basis of what they know already, without demands being made on them for correct responses. Questions that might arise are usually able to be answered immediately.

In her study of early readers, Durkin (1966) found that, although only 4 of the 49 children were reported as having been given no help by their parents in learning to read, most of the remaining, received assistance after they had exhibited, by the nature of their questions, that they had made considerable progress in acquiring literacy skills through their own self-initiated strategies. Durkin (1966) records for example, in her case study report of Paul, one of the children involved in her study, that he was helped by people answering his many persistent questions about words that interested him. His mother reported that she grew tired of "running to Paul [him] to see what word he was asking about" (p. 62), and so encouraged him to spell out the word and she would tell him what it was. Paul was a black boy of average intelligence who had been read to by both parents since before he was four, and the books had always been held during the reading so that he could see the pages easily.

In another of her case study reports, Durkin records that the parents had never tried to teach their daughter to read since they believed "that the school should do that kind of teaching." The mother did not know how Carol had learned to read but indicated that she had been read to "since the age of two" by both the father and the mother, and that she "loved to be read to." She had demonstrated an interest in the words on the pages of the stories being read to her by asking questions such as "Where are you reading?" or "What word says that?" (p. 61). The mother recalled that Carol had shown a very special interest in Seuss' The Cat in the Hat, a book that both parents read to her again and again at her request to the point where "Carol practically memorized the whole thing" (p. 61). The mother believed that this book in particular, had done much to encourage her daughter's great interest in written language.

Bissex (1979) in her case study report of her son's literacy development, indicated that he had grown "up in a home where reading was a common activity and books were everywhere" (p. 166). He had been read to regularly, since he had started to talk, by parents who enjoyed the task and had plenty of books of his own. He had received no systematic instruction in reading until he went to school, other than what he might have picked up from television programmes such as Sesame Street and The Electric Company. In commenting on Paul's early development as a reader, Bissex observed that:

> Before Paul recognized words, he recognized stories. At two and a half years he sat down with a Curious George book that had been read aloud to him many times and, turning the pages, said the story that went with each picture. This was not a memorization of what he'd heard but a kind of reconstruction. It was not simply telling [her emphasis] the story because it was done in the context of looking at the book and turning the pages, saying aloud sentences that

> went with the pictures on each of these pages. ... This corresponds to Clay's "page matching" stage (1969, p. 45), the earliest, most global attempt to find some print to match a verbal response. Only later individual words are matched to or located in print. (p. 166)

When Paul was 5 years 4 months, Bissex reported that he brought the book Ape in the Cape to her. This story had been read aloud to him several times previously, and was one that provided rhyme and picture clues for some of the words. She describes how he went about reading it:

> ... Paul read "pig with a wig," "rat with a bat," "whale in a gale" - though after deciphering "gale" correctly, he wondered if it was right because the word was unfamiliar to him. "Toad on" he read, then asked for "the" slowly figured out "road." He worked over the words very quietly to himself and only when he had the whole phrase, said it aloud quickly: early evidence of his not reading just word by word but attending to meaningful groups. (p. 170)

It can be seen that the book experience situation has been able to provide the avenue through which self-initiated literacy learning can begin to take place in preschool children. Being read to was obviously an enjoyable, secure and socially satisfying situation for the parents and the children. Books were able to become associated with intensely pleasurable experiences, which may have stimulated the children to begin to retrieve them for themselves through reading-like behaviour. Questions were stimulated and answered without obvious attempts to instruct. The children, as Carroll (1966) suggested, were able to select those "printed language stimuli" that they could interpret at any stage. Just as in oral language learning "information was immediate to the situation at the optimal moment" (McKenzie, 1976, p. 48). The rate and scope of the children's learning seemed to be controlled from within, and repetition of favourite stories provided them with means whereby they could begin to experiment with reproducing a story for themselves. Their growing familiarity with the structure of these stories in terms of their 'concept of story' and the patterns of written language gave them a further basis from which to do this. As Holdaway (1979) suggests:

> Children with a background of book experience since infancy develop a complex range of attitudes, concepts and skills predisposing them to literacy. They are likely to continue into literacy on entering school with a minimum of discontinuity. (p. 49)

One of the main purposes of this study is to examine the development of this "complex range of attitudes, concepts and skills" in children in the naturalistic settings of their homes.

Attitude, Attention and Motivation and Early Book Experience

It is significant that a recent publication of the International Reading Association entitled Attitudes and Reading (Alexander and Filler, 1976) contains no reference to the importance of children's preschool years in developing their attitudes towards reading. This is even more surprising when these authors define 'attitudes' as "a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid the reading situation" (p. 1). In discussing the importance of reading before school entry Clay (1972) for example, writes:

> The most valuable preschool preparation for school learning is to love books, and to know that there is a world of interesting ideas in them. Parents who love to share books with children transmit their feelings, their understanding and their language patterns to their little listeners. (p. 17)

A writer for the Illinois State Office of Education puts it even more strongly in a publication which that office circulates to parents in its district:

> The most important single factor in developing your children's desire to read is constant exposure to books at home as a natural, pleasant part of their daily life. It is important that they associate reading with happy experiences. A child who is having a good time when using books will probably want to continue this association. (Cited in Jolly, 1980, p. 994)

The oversight of Alexander and Filler in omitting any reference to the contribution made by these all important preschool years in children's attitude development in reading would seem to be a further example of the view held by some reading educators that learning to read starts only after the children enter school. It may well be however, that the preschool years are the most important period in a child's life, as Clay and the Illinois State Office of Education's writer claim, in the development of "a system of feelings ...which causes the learner to approach or avoid the reading situation."

There seems to be little doubt that children's love of books can be developed very early in their lives. Larrick (1975) believes that children can begin to enjoy books by the time they are approximately eight months old and maintains that the experience of parents and their children sharing books regularly in the story time situation also develops the children's aptitude for reading. In reporting the case histories of three babies, Church (1966) records the following observations made by a mother of one of the children:

> 11 months 3 weeks
> He likes to look at pictures in magazines but hasn't reacted to anything specific before. (p. 140)
>
> 15 months 6 days
> He likes to look at magazines and often brings one that has pictures of dogs. (p. 143)
>
> 2 years 1 month
> A sudden consuming interest in being read to has developed in the last couple of weeks. He has about a dozen books, most of them dreadful little stories about wild animals he's never seen (the three prime favourites are the "rosserus," the "hittopotamus" and the "gorwawa"), and these are read four or five times through at a sitting - or as many times as the reader's patience holds out. Of course he knows them almost by heart and if you pause in the reading will provide the next three or four words. (p. 155)
>
> 27 months 17 days
> His bedtime rituals are changing but still evident. He must be read to - as many books as the reader will stand for ... (p. 159)

This development of a marked interest in books and in being read to was also characteristic of the other two children involved in Church's study.

In an investigation which was aimed at identifying the range of reading and reading-related experiences of 106 children prior to entry into first grade and their subsequent success in learning to read, Almy (1949) concluded that personal experiences with reading were the best means for developing "readiness" for learning to read. The parents of the children involved in the study were interviewed and most of them reported that their children were interested in reading and liked to be read to. Durkin (1966), in her study of early readers, found that 44 of the 49 parents commented that being read to at home was an important source of their child's interest in reading. "Eagerness to keep up with an older sibling" was mentioned by 23 of them and the "availability of reading materials in the home" by 21, as the other most frequently referred to influences. In a study directed at investigating the factors related to the reading ability of beginning kindergarten children, Hochstetler (1975) reported that:

> The five most influential factors that encouraged children to take an interest in reading in this study were: being read to; seeing others read; having reading materials available; viewing television; and curiosity. (p. 212)

As a result of his study of 36 avid readers in grades two, four and six in elementary schools in Alberta, Cebuliak (1977) concluded that:

> The more interest and attention shown by parents to their children's reading habits, the more likely the children may be inclined to pursue those reading activities. Early parental involvement in the form of bedtime stories was universal in the cases of these avid readers.
>
> The reading climate instilled by the parents at home should not be under-estimated as being one of the most significant and powerful forces of inducing reading activities in children. (p. 206, 207)

A basic principle which appears to be common to the various theories of learning is that individuals will tend to try and reproduce a behaviour, if that behaviour and its outcomes are pleasurable to them. Obviously stories themselves, with their range of themes, plots, characterizations, eposodic structure and a language that is often rhythmic, rhyming and melodious in character, can have a strong attraction for the children that their reading and rereading is frequently demanded. But as well as books providing pleasure through the nature of the stories that are contained in them, the bedtime story situation brings a social contact of a very important kind to young children. The sharing of books between parents and their children allows for as Arbuthnot (1964) suggests "a warm family experience" where the children have the individual attention of the parent for an uninterrupted period of time. There is often close physical contact between the participants, and the stories themselves provide the stimulation for a range of old and new experiences to talk and ask about. It is not difficult to see, then, that the most powerful associations children form for books and reading, may well be established through the many hours parents and their preschool children spend in this atmosphere of human sharing, which, for the more fortunate children, may start from the time they are born.

Closely related to the development of attitudes in reading is the concept of attention. The role of attention appears to have been ignored almost completely by researchers in the field of reading. Samuels (1972) for example reported that:

> The literature reveals an important gap: namely, no one has investigated individual differences in attention and distractibility in a first-grade class and related this to measures of reading achievement. (pp. 7-84)

The three aspects of attention that would appear to be important in early reading development are: the cognitive and physical aspects of knowing where to look and what to look at; the duration of time that children are prepared to spend in reading and reading-like activity; and the more interrelated and cognitively influenced aspect of a 'set to learn' or what Holdaway (1979) refers to in written language learning as a 'set towards literacy.'

As a part of her longitudinal study of 100 five year old children learning to read in New Zealand schools, Clay (1972) examined the development of their ability to know where to look and what to look at on a page while being read to. She found for example, that on entry to school, 48 percent of the five year old children could synchronize their pointing with a word by word reading of a simple text. After a year's instruction in reading 84 percent completed this task successfully. There were still 16 percent of the children tested therefore, who could not match what was being said with what was on the page. Clay makes the point that: "The child's attempts to read cannot be matched correctly to the printed text unless he is attending to the correct position when he says a word and is proceeding in the correct direction as he completes the sentence" (p. 146). In order to be able to read fluently she believes that "the child must develop a scanning sequence that is appropriate to the printed text, and then he must practice the scanning pattern until it becomes habitual" (p. 133).

A recent experiment conducted by Johns (1980) in the United States, using the same test instrument as Clay, found that while all the above average and average grade one readers could synchronize their pointing exactly as the print was read to them, 20 percent of the below average readers involved in the study, could not. Since the test was conducted at the end of the children's grade one year at school, this meant that 4 out of a total of 60 children tested still may not have known exactly where to look on the page as they were reading, despite experiencing reading instruction for almost two school years.

The development of the implicit (or explicit) knowledge of where to look and what to look at on the printed page coupled with the fine motor skill of focusing and refocusing the eyes in a series of fixation pauses as they move across and down the page must be a difficult and demanding task for the young child. In learning to read children must learn to attend selectively to print, on the basis of what information is of most use to them. "Attention," Smith (1975) suggests, "is perhaps best conceptualized as questions being asked by our brain, and our perceptions are what the brain decides must be the answers" (p. 28). In order to gain enough experience with print to be able to engage in effective hypothesis testing of the kind that Smith describes, to build their knowledge of written language and their skill in looking at it, young children would appear to need to be immersed constantly in whole, meaningful written language being used, just as they are immersed in oral language. The regular, family shared-book experience situation would seem to provide one of the opportunities for this to occur. Through being read to, the children are provided with the chance to learn book handling skills, to understand that the story moves in a certain direction through the book, to see that the pictures are related to the story,and eventually, to realize that the print on the pages carries the story and that what is being said can be matched with what is on the page. One of the main purposes of this study is to examine the role of the bedtime story in facilitating the development of these aspects of children's learning about written language.

The second dimension of the concept of attention that needs to be examined in this review, relates to the duration of time that young children will spend either participating in shared-book experience or on their own with books. In describing some of the procedures he had used to teach his two year old son to read, Callaway (1974) commented on how the boy, by the age of 2 years and 3 months "had developed an insatiable appetite for having stories read to him." One evening he decided to investigate the boy's attention span for being read to. He writes:

> I became curious about how long he would listen to me read without losing interest, so I decided to read to him as usual one night but to continue as long as he showed interest. I placed a large number of his favourite books beside the bed and began reading to him at about nine o'clock. Unfortunately, my staying power was not equal to his, and when my voice began to crack about two a.m. I was forced to stop. His eyes were wide open and alert when I closed the last book as they were when we started five hours earlier. To underscore the fact that he was ready for more, he softly cried in protest before drifting off to sleep. (p. 14)

In commenting on the role of practice in the learning of oral language by young children Cazden (1972) noted how they engage spontaneously in the repetition of sounds and words. She observed that, "There is also evidence that children seek opportunities for repetition in listening. In natural circumstances they ask for the same nursery rhyme or story over and over again" (p. 96). This repetition was observed in Church's (1966) study of three babies where he reported the following diary entry which was made by one of the mother's concerning her son Benjamin:

> 19 months 20 days
> We have been telling him (over and over again) the stories of The Three Little Pigs, The Three Bears, and Little Red Riding Hood. He knows them so well now that he can respond at appropriate moments with words ("Calf," "pig," etc.) or gestures (he always beats on the floor, the table, or his tummy at the words "knocked on the door"). He seems to love to have the stories repeated and one can usually divert him from anger or irritability or frustration just by starting with "Once upon a time..." (p. 149).

Church also reported that Benjamin would listen to stories for as long as one of his parents was prepared to read to him, and that this was also characteristics of the other two children involved in the study.

But preschool children will not only attend to stories being read to them for a long period of time, they will also engage in independent activity with their books. Nila B. Smith (1963) described how a daughter of a friend of hers used to do this:

> When Cathy was three, the writer, together with other guests, frequently spent an evening in her home. As the guests arrived, Cathy would gather up half a dozen books, seat herself under a lamp, literally devouring books for long periods of time.
>
> When turning four, Cathy began asking what certain words were; she would sit by herself and read orally from books, largely from memory but recognizing a word here and there. (p. 449)

As a result of her longitudinal case study of her own daughter's written language learning from the age of two years to five years, Rhodes (1979) reported a similar, self-directed aspect that was evident in Kara's behaviour. She writes:

> Besides determining the content of her written language learning, Kara also determines the timing of her learning efforts. In the last three years, I have observed her devote the major part of several days to the outdoors and her neighborhood friends and then devote the next few days to reading and anything to do with paper - cutting, pasting, writing, drawing and coloring. (p. 6)

It must be presumed, that these self-generated repetitions of a particular kind of behaviour serve some important cognitive function that is implicitly relevant to the children. According to Elkind (1967), "Repetitive behaviour in the child is frequently the outward manifestation of an emerging cognitive ability and the need to realize that ability through action" (p. 543). By having stories read and reread to them, young children may be obtaining repetitive experience with them so that they can, through a growing familiarity with a particular story, retrieve it for themselves, as Nila B. Smith's Cathy appeared to be doing. Ackerman (1977) for example, as a result of a study in which he examined the adult-child interactions which occurred between a preschool child's "teacher" or mother as an outcome of repeated readings of stories, found the children participated far more as stories were reread, and frequently recited passages that they had memorized. Reading, for children in the early stages of their development, is probably viewed more as a process of 'telling' a story in response to the pictures, rather than a process that involves interpreting the black marks on the pages. In order to emulate the reading behavior of their parents, they may see a retelling of a story as a reading of that story. In order to gain increasing mastery over their favourite stories they intuitively request that they be read and reread.

An even more subtle effect in young children's attending behaviour with regard to books and reading, may lie in what Entwisle (1971) refers to as their "control beliefs" (p. 6-112). In explaining this concept she cites the report prepared by Coleman (1966) where he states that "It appears that children from advantaged groups assume that the environment will respond if they are able to effect it; children from disadvantaged groups do not make the assumption but in many cases assume that nothing they will do can effect the environment" (p. 321). It would seem to make sense that children who approach learning to read either naturally, or as a result of formal instruction, with the confidence that they will be able to exert their control over the task, are in a far stronger position than those children who come to the task assuming that they have little or no chance of effecting any control over it. Children who have had extensive pleasurable and repetitive experiences with books during their preschool years and who have succeeded in retrieving some of their favourite stories for themselves through reading-like behaviour, may well be exercising their "control beliefs" through this activity.

It is doubtful if the full potential of young children to listen to stories being read for unlimited periods of time has ever been fully explored. Callaway's (1974) attempt to do this with his two year old son, although commendable, failed. Many of the studies of early readers (Durkin, 1966; Clark, 1976; Gardner, 1970 and Plessas and Oakes, 1964) record observations made by the parents concerning the great amount of time that their children would spend in the company of books, sometimes alone, sometimes with the parents, and sometimes with older siblings who were prepared to read to them. But spending a lot of time with books is not just the perogative of early readers.

Lomax (1977) who studied the interest of 28, three and four year old nursery school children in books and stories in Scotland, found that the amount of time these children spent with books, either being read to or in solitary play with them, was directly related to the amount of experience that they had with being read to at home. She identified two groups of children on the basis of the amount of time that they were observed to spend in activities related to books while attending a nursery school. The "high interest" or Story Group comprised 14 children who spent more than 14 minutes in these activities during the day, and the "low interest" or Comparison Group comprised 14 children who were seen to spend less than 3 minutes. As a result of parent interviews and the observation of the children in the school, Lomax reported that "All the high-interest children had considerable experience of stories at home, but this was true for only some of the low interest children. No children were found who showed high interest at school but had little experience at home" (p. 100). She also found that the low interest group generally spent far less time on a particular activity, preferred to play with other children and engaged in short periods of time on a variety of non-specific activities, whereas the high interest had much longer attention spans for any particular activity and seemed content to engage in solitary play more than their counterparts.

Being read to in the home or school then, would seem to present children with the opportunity to develop "a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner(s) to approach ... the reading situation" (Alexander and Filler, 1976, p. 1). As a result of this they would appear to be able to spend increasing amounts of time with books in various ways, developing probably even more positive attitudes towards them and constantly extending their attention spans while engaged in reading and reading-like activities. Perhaps as Huey (1908) suggested, given plenty of books and someone who will "play this way [pointing to the words as they read] and read aloud ... . The [the] child will keep it up by the hour and the week and the month, and his natural learning to read is only a question of time" (pp. 332-3).

The importance of motivation has long been acknowledged as a powerful force in learning. In attempting to understand developmental learning it is necessary to distinguish between the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation. Extrinsic motivation is seen to come from sources which lie outside the learner such as parental or teacher approval given as the result of some successfully completed task. Intrinsic motivation however, is generated from within the learner and originates in the personal desires, learning goals, and rewards that individuals seek for themselves. In referring to the persistent behaviour of infants in grasping, handling, and letting go of objects for example, White (1959) reminds us that this is not random behaviour which is provided simply by an overflow of energy. He observed that:

> It is directed, selected and persistent and it continues not because it serves primary drives, which indeed it cannot serve until it is almost perfect, but because it satisfies an intrinsic need to deal with the environment. (p. 297)

Coupled with this intrinsic desire to cope with the outside world with increasing degrees of competence, are the internally felt rewards obtained from any knowledge of success achieved by doing so. There is now considerable evidence available (Decci,1975; Donaldson, 1978) to demonstrate that intrinsic motivation is a much more powerful force in learning than motivation of the extrinsic kind. It has been found that extrinsic rewards may even harm learning that has not been induced initially from intrinsically motivated sources since the individual will tend to stop trying to learn once the rewards are withdrawn.

Although learning to talk has been seen as a process that is motivated and controlled primarily by sources from within the child, learning to read, because of the generally accepted view that it can seldom occur without instruction, has come to be seen as a process that requires direction and stimulation from the external source of the teacher. But a search of the literature has revealed no studies that have been directed at examining the relationship or the effects of motivation, either extrinsic and intrinsic, on learning to read in the early stages. Torrey (1979) comments however, that featured in all the reports of early readers, were references to "the underlying patterns of motivation that dispose certain children to engage in these learning experiences at sufficient length for reading" (p. 123). Prominent in all the reports of the literacy oriented activities these children engaged in, was the amount of motivation that seemed to be present. She referred to how Durkin (1966), for example:

> ... collected adjectives most often used in describing early readers in the California study. "Persistent" and "perfectionist" were included in half or more of the cases. ... Other motivational descriptions were mostly comments on the unusual interest the early readers showed in being read to, in printing, in spelling, and, of course, in reading. (p. 123)

Torrey concludes, as a result of her examination of the studies of early readers that:

> The findings on the histories of early readers might be summarized by saying that they were not taught to read, they just learned in an environment that contained enough stimulation and material. They took the initiative and reached out to find just the specific help they needed in solving the problem of how to read. (p. 123)

A programme cited by Torrey (1979) that demonstrated the effectiveness of learning to read through intrinsically motivated and self-regulated learning was that devised by O. K. Moore (1963). He created what he called an "autotelic" or "responsive environment," where everything was learned for its own sake, without the presence of extrinsic rewards, which Moore felt, only interfered with children's learning. He worked from the principle of never imposing learning on the children that was against their natural inclination, and provided them with a "talking typewriter" which would show a letter or word on the screen that had been typed, and then would pronounce it. The children could stay with the machine as long as they continued to operate it. Moore found that by making full use of the children's ability to discover relationships and that by structuring the machine in such a way that "the learner is [was] likely to make a series of inter-connected discoveries..." (p. 2) the children, who were mostly of preschool age and ranged from intellectually slow to especially bright, were able to make considerable progress in learning to read. Torrey concluded her description of the programme by stating that:

> As the program moved ahead into stories, Moore used Aesop's Fables rather than conventional primer texts on the grounds that such stories had stood the test of time as interesting material for children and would thus provide automatic and intrinsic reward for success in reading them. ... With no motive other than curiosity stimulated by a clever sequence of events, the learners were led to a self-directed learning process similar to that which early readers create for themselves out of more ordinary circumstances. (p. 138)

Of all the characteristics that seemed to be present in the development of early readers, the most striking, Torrey claimed, was their striving to learn to read "at the initiative [her emphasis] of the child, which seems to be almost opposite of reading as it is learned in school" (p. 141). This characteristic was noted similarly by Rhodes (1979), as a result of her observational study of the literacy learning of her preschool daughter. She commented:

> Kara has initiated much of her learning. To a large extent, she is the one who determines the content of her learning, the timing of her learning efforts, and the structure of her learning activities. In an environment rich with meaningful oral and written language, Kara is her own best teacher. Far better than anyone else, she knows what she is interested in, how she enjoys learning, and when she is ready for new information. (p. 4)

It can be seen from this brief review then, that the concepts of attitude, attention and motivation are all intrinsically interrelated and interdependent and can all play a highly significant role in the development of children's emergent reading behaviours. One of the purposes of this study is to examine this role and the factors which influence their development in preschool children.

Reading-Like Behaviour

One of the most interesting behaviours which appears to result from the repeated reading of favourite stories is the ability, frequently demonstrated by very young children, to reproduce their stories with varying degrees of accuracy, through reading-like behaviour. In a study that was designed to examine the changes in the verbal interactions between preschool children and their mothers with increasing language skills, Moerk (1974) found that the use of picture story books by the mothers provided the children with a powerful source of new vocabulary and sentence structures. Of particular interest to this study is his description of how the mothers encouraged their children to participate in the reading. He writes:

> The learning by heart of nursery rhymes, little songs, short stories from picture story books, and even advertisements from TV seems to be another influential source for the acquisition of vocabulary and the development of more complex sentence structures. Many of the children who were observed in the author's previous studies knew such rhyming stories almost by heart and engaged with pleasure in a repeated production of them. The mothers used a mechanism of incomplete stories quite often to induce children to become more involved in the completion of the stories. The rhyming, together with the strong rhythmic character of these little stories, seems to be of considerable help to the child. The language structures produced by the child in connection with these rhymes were clearly more complex than in the child's own spontaneous production. (p. 102)

Reference has already been made in the previous section of this review, to the way in which children will request stories to be read over and over again, how they begin to participate in the reading with the parent, and how they seem ultimately, to be able to reproduce most, if not all of the story themselves. Bissex (1979) for example, reported how her son Paul, at two and one-half years of age retrieved one of his favourite stories, reproducing its meaning by saying the story that went with each picture. She pointed out that Paul's "reading" was not based on a rote-memorization of the words of the story, but was a process of verbal "reconstruction" from the stimulus of the pictures, coupled probably with some elements of the original text. Durkin's (1966)

Carol had done the same thing with The Cat in the Hat and could retrieve that story with a surprising degree of accuracy. Church (1966) also reported that Benjamin, at two years one month, knew at least three of his favourite stories "almost by heart," and Smith's (1963) Carla demonstrated how she would engage in reading-like behaviour at three and four years of age, on her own instigation.

The other two children involved in Church's (1966) study, also began to self-direct their own reading-like behaviour at a very early age. Debbie's mother recorded the following observation of the emergence of this type of activity in her daughter:

> 2 years 3 weeks
>
> Books: The extreme translation-into-action phase (physically translating the action of the story) has passed and been replaced by verbal associations to a picture or a word. She begins to enjoy going through books by herself with a monologue of chatter as she "reads" aloud. She often reads to one of her dolls or animals, choosing sometimes a book about a bear to read to a bear, and the like. She is apparently extremely familar with the details of each book's contents, for she can go find any specific book and turn pages until she comes to the one item that she needs to illustrate some association she had during a conversation or while playing or watching TV. (p. 99)

At this point in the diary record, Church notes the power of Debbie's eidetic capacity and suggests that "Parents can often use their small children as a mnemonic storage unit, since the children can many times recall names, the details of the clothing, and other minutaie lost to the adult" (p. 99). Debbie's mother reported on the accuracy of her daughter's memory by recording how she would object "if I change a word in a story being read" (p. 100).

The requirement on the part of the child listener, for the parent to "stay with the story in the book," was present also in Ruth, the third of Church's case studies. Her mother recorded the following observation in her diary:

> 22 months 25 days
>
> I've discovered that Ruth sneaks out of bed to read, and when she hears me coming she scurries back to bed and pretends to be asleep.
>
> Ruth makes the distinction perfectly clear: "Don't tell a story; read Ruth a story from the book." [Ruth's emphasis]. She repeats to herself all of the stories I read to her... . Ruth pretends to read. She sits with an open book and recites the pages from memory. (p. 278)

Apart from the significance of the little girl, before the age of two, engaging in self-directed, reading-like behaviour, and being so strongly motivated, to do it at times secretly after she had been put to bed, there seems to be a strong possibility that she could already distinguish between "telling" a story and "reading" a story.

The problem of learning that stories were contained in books and that their language did not change was one that Jean-Paul Sartre faced as he attempted to cope with the task of becoming an independent reader before he went to school.

In his autobiography The Words, Sartre (1964) gave an insightful, retrospective account of how he used reading-like behaviour to self-direct his own learning to read strategies. The breakthrough to independence came for him when he finally realized that the stories that had been told to him by his mother, and which he knew by heart, were actually contained in a book and were therefore available to him. He related how, after being given two books by his uncle, he had tried to create a feeling of ownership for them and how:

> On the verge of tears I finally put them on my mother's lap. She raised her eyes from her sewing: "What would you like me to read to you darling? The Fairies?" I asked incredulously: "Are the fairies in there?" [his emphasis]. I knew the story; my mother often told it to me when she washed me ... (p. 28).

Sartre went on to describe how the full realization about books containing words and stories came as the servant girl Anne Marie read to him and how he came to prefer "prefabricated" stories to "improvised" ones: "I grew sensitive to the rigorous succession of the words. At each reading, they returned, always the same and in the same order. I awaited them" (p. 30). Finally, he decided to take the matter of learning to read into his own hands and for a rather surprising reason:

> I then became jealous of my mother and resolved to take her role away. I got my hands on a work entitled Tribulations of a Chinese in China and went off with it to a store-room. There, perched

> on a cot, I pretended to read. My eyes followed the black signs without skipping a single one, and I told myself a story aloud, being careful to utter all the syllables. I was taken by surprise - or saw to it that I was - a great fuss was made, and the family decided that it was time to teach me the alphabet. I was as zealous as a catechumen. I went so far as to give myself private lessons. I would climb up on my cot with Hector Malot's No Family, which I knew by heart, and, half reciting, half deciphering, I went through every page of it, one after the other. When the last page was turned, I knew how to read. I was wild with joy. (p. 30)

In a much earlier reference to this behaviour Huey (1908), after discussing learning to read naturally and its parallel with learning to talk, gave a precise description of a young child's growing, detailed familiarity with favourite books and stories. He pointed out that "The very page of certain favourite starting points come to be accurately located .... Some jingles and stories read to him become so familar that he knows them throughout" (p. 331). He observed how a child, when no one will read to him, often "takes one of his books to a corner and 'reads,' improvising a story, or perhaps only babbling, but 'taking off,' the best he can, the reading that he has heard" (p. 331). Huey went on to describe his experience with a four year old boy who had never tried to read but who shared a new picture story book of Old Mother Hubbard with him:

> He knew the story already, but had me read it aloud over and over again, following my finger over the lines and also keeping the places by the

> pictures. He would then "read" it by turns with me, and actually came to keep his finger "on the place" throughout, at the first sitting (p. 332)

Huey concluded that, provided someone would participate actively by reading to and with the child over a long period of time, "his natural learning to read is only a question of time."

One of the necessary conditions for reading-like behaviour to appear in children's learning to read strategies would seem to be the necessity of not only being read to on a regular basis, but also being reread favourite stories repeatedly. Since parents usually prefer to read a variety of stories, the rereading situation can come about either through there being only a limited supply of books available in the home, or by the parents allowing the children to choose as soon as they are old enough, the books that they want read to them. As a result of a careful study of 25 early readers conducted in England, Gardner (1970) reported that reading to the children was a common feature of the rearing regime and although the choice of books was wide, it was the child and not the parent who usually chose the story.

As could be expected, they chose their favourite stories to be read, but of particular interest to this study, is the reason that Gardner sees for this repetitive reading and the appearance of reading-like behaviour:

> Thirteen mothers commented that they were surprised by the way their children insisted on a favourite story over and over again. This I consider, is important. It was obvious that children learnt their story off by heart, anticipated the text, and began to identify words in print in this way. I would speculate that it was not the breadth of experience of listening to stories that was important, nor the adult evaluation of what was a good or a bad story. It was the isolation by the child of a single piece of writing as the means for investigating our written code. [This writer's emphasis]. (p. 20)

This opportunity to become aware of the presence of written language on the pages of stories and to begin to inspect it more carefully would seem to be a necessary part of learning to read.

Clay (1972), one of the few researchers to examine the behaviour of preschool children 'reading' their favourite stories, described the practice as "talking like a book" (p. 28). She reported how one young boy who was 'reading' to himself in bed remarked that "I wish I could really truly read this book for myself" (pp. 28-29). Another child stated, "I can't read all the words but I know what they say" (p. 29). Both of these children indicated by their remarks that they had developed an important understanding about reading. Despite the fact that they were successfully retrieving their stories for themselves, they knew that they were not reading in the true sense of the word and the second child in particular knew that in order to read you have to be able to recognize "all the words." Mason (1967) found for example, that most of 197 preschoolers he questioned in Georgia thought that they could read when in fact they could not. He concluded, as a result of this study that "one of the first steps in actually learning to read is learning that one doesn't already know how" (p. 132). While it is possible to dispute Mason's claim that the development of this understanding is "one of the first steps" in the process of learning to read, it would seem to be important for young children to learn, at least at the implicit level, what they have to do to be able to read. Although Mason did not explain the possible reasons for his preschoolers thinking that they could read, it is probable that they saw the personalized retelling of their favourite stories through the use of picture clues as reading, and were still not aware of the presence of print on the pages of their books.

As a result of her studies, Clay (1966, 1970) reached the conclusion that reading-like behaviour ("talking like a book") served some very important purposes in children learning to read. By moving from the more globally directed "page matching" 'reading' which Bissex (1979) described with her son's 'reading' of Curious George Gets a Medal, through a fluent, but more accurate reproduction of the text of the story, to the stage where they 'read' in a more deliberate manner as they try to match their eye-ear and voice, children would seem to be provided with the opportunity to learn a great deal about reading and the written language of their books. While absolute accuracy of their reproduction of the text may not be their aim at this stage, progressive approximation towards more adequate responses are made, and as a result of their regular practice, children are able, Clay (1972) suggests, to learn the following important concepts about reading:

> . Print can be turned into speech
> . There is a message recorded
> . The picture is a rough guide to that message
> . Some language units are more likely to occur than others
> . Memory, or what the ear remembers, helps. (p. 29)

These concepts comprise some of the elements of linguistic awareness which will be discussed in the next section of this review and their development would appear to play an important role in learning to read.

Not all children of course engage in reading-like behaviour with favourite stories. This may be for a variety of reasons, not the least of which could be that they are seldom if ever read to during their preschool years. Many parents involved in Durkin's (1966) study of early and non-early readers reported on the way their children requested their favourite stories to be read repetitively. They remarked also on the ease with which the children "memorized" these stories. One mother of a non-early reader however, whose son "memorizes easily," soon put a stop to his opportunity to do this. Durkin records that:

> This "tendency to memorize" was referred to again when the mother told how she used to read to Steve, but stopped when he was about four. At that age, she explained, "He started memorizing all the stories." Asked why she was concerned about memorization, the mother stated very emphatically that she "didn't want him to memorize words." "I wanted them sounded out," she said. (p. 127)

Less drastic reasons for the non-appearance of reading-like behaviour in children, despite the fact that they are read to regularly, might lie, as has already been suggested, in the way in which the stories are selected to be read. Some parents may well believe in variety rather than repetition, thereby giving the growing child little opportunity to develop an attachment for a particular book and to learn its language through repeated readings.

The manner in which the reading is done may also be a determiner of this behaviour. Hoskisson (1974) for example, has been using a technique which he calls "assisted reading" for helping children learn to read. Here the children listen using earphones, to a tape recording of a story made by the teacher as they follow along the printed text, on a repetitive basis. He reports that:

> The teacher had the best results with listening and reading when reading of the selection was paced to suit the fluency level of the pupils, for the slow readers lost their places and day-dreamed if their stories were read too quickly. The fast readers became restless and inattentive if the reading pace was slow ... . The pupils

> read best when the tapes were paced at rates that approximated their individual fluency rates. (p. 834)

McNeil (1970), as a result of his research, concluded that in learning to listen to oral language, the comprehension rate for young children is best at their own rate of speech. The rate at which children are read to may be a factor which effects their opportunity to understand the story, thereby interfering with their ability to reproduce the meaning of the story through reading-like behaviour.

Another factor related to the parent's style of story reading which may restrict or prevent reading-like behaviour from developing in their children could lie in whether or not they invite the children to participate in the reading by the manner in which they read. Moerk (1974) commented on how the mothers involved in his study, encouraged their children to become involved in the reading by stopping before the end of easily predictable sentences so that the children were given the opportunity to complete them. Some parents may not pause long enough in their reading for that to happen so the possibility of the children participating at an overt level at least would be reduced considerably.

A study conducted by Shannon (1977) appears to have indicated that restricting a preschool child's use of reading-like behaviour may well play an important role in limiting his ability and drive to learn to read through his own self-directed efforts. The subject of Shannon's study was a four year old boy who had not experienced any instruction in reading either from nursery school or television, and "according to his mother, he was not interested in looking at books and would not sit still for her to read to him" (p. 24). Shannon carried out a programme of reading to the boy using picture-story books with predictable language, encouraging him to participate as much as possible, talking to him about words, pointing to the print frequently as she read and encouraging him to do likewise. Although she found his concentration span to be very short initially, it improved rapidly. He was very cooperative and soon mastered the orientation and directionality aspects of print and started to match what was being said with what was on the page. He 'read' fluently and seemed to have little difficulty in reproducing various parts of the stories. He began to gain control over the difficult task of matching his finger with his voice and even commenced self-correcting his efforts to do this. Shannon recorded that "His mother reported a sudden interest in books, and at his request he was allowed to take books home when they were finished. However, he usually memorized these and recited them so rapidly it was obvious he was not focusing on the words, so this practice was discontinued. Then he began to check books out of the church library." (p. 27)

Soon after this, Shannon reports that the boy started to lose interest in reading and the rapid progress that was being made in the attitudinal, attentional and motivational aspects of learning to read appeared to stop altogether. By preventing the child from engaging in reading-like behaviour with the stories he already knew and by starting to use materials that contained few supporting illustrations and stories that he could not relate to or reproduce easily because of the nature of their language, Shannon had virtually eliminated the possibility of this boy being able to continue to concentrate on those aspects of written language learning he had begun to master as a result of his own self-directed efforts.

In his book, Success and Failure in Learning to Read, Morris (1963) refers to "The Little Red Hen" or "story method" period (1899-1922) of reading instruction. Here the children in learning to read, were encouraged to memorize the rhythmical, musical and repetitive language of The Little Red Hen and predictably written stories like it, and to use their memory for the texts to recognize and remember increasing numbers of words. Ultimately the children moved from a "memorized" reading of the story to genuine reading.

The use of this approach died however, with the publication of the results of a single experiment that had been conducted by Buswell in 1922. He demonstrated by the use of eye movement photography, that many of the children in a group learning to read by the "story method" were not always looking at the words on the page as they read. The children in a group being taught by specific word recognition techniques however, were found to be looking at the words most of the time. Buswell concluded, as a result of his experiment, that teachers should be wary of stories and methods of teaching which encouraged memorization, since children could scarcely learn to read if they did not look at the words constantly. The story of The Little Red Hen disappeared from beginning reading books, and memorization became something to be avoided at all costs in learning to read. It is interesting to note that Shannon, over 50 years later, should view it in the same light. Perhaps, rather than discussing reading-like behaviour as dangerous to reading development, it would have been more profitable to have examined why the children involved in using it, were able to do so with apparent ease and enjoyment and what contribution the process might be able to make in their learning to read.

In a recent article on language acquisition Stross (1978), the noted anthropologist whose major interest is in studying the origins of language, provides some interesting reasons as to why very young children appear to have little difficulty in reproducing their favourite stories for themselves, after hearing them only a few times. Although he is discussing oral language development, since reading-like behaviour develops as a result of hearing stories read, his observations would appear to be directly relevant to this behaviour. Stross suggests that there is strong evidence available to indicate that:

> ... children possess to a greater or lesser degree an auditory version of the "photographic memory" with which psychologists have long been familiar. Such auditory "imagery" is a vivid perceptual recall of sounds in which linguistic experience can be perceptually revived minutes, hours, or even days after first being sensed. Incidence of this phenomenon in children appears to decrease with age and to be extremely rare after puberty. (p. 754)

In support of this view, Stross points to the research of Cazden (1965) for example, who found that the more varied and novel the verbal stimulus to which children are exposed, the greater is their language development. Studies conducted by Alstyne (1929), Cohen (1968), Irwin (1960), and Moerk (1974) have all demonstrated that reading regularly to young children stimulates the development of their vocabularies and in some cases, the amount and complexity of the language they produced. The fact that young children demonstrate an amazing facility to learn, not only their own native language, but other languages as well, provided they are similarly immersed in these languages being used, is a further example of children possessing as Stross suggests, "... a special kind of memory that can deal appropriately and effectively with variety and novelty in the child's (children's) linguistic environment by overcoming the ephemerality of speech"

(p. 755). This "special kind of memory," he believes, provides a very strong argument for avoiding structuring a "strict ordering of learning tasks, even within limits imposed by the child's own search for input" (p. 754). It also supplies a very strong reason for immersing the child in a rich, linguistic environment, since, as Stross states:

> Stimuli not attended or assimilated at the moment may be stored for retrieval at a later, more opportune time when the backlog of experience is sufficient to make them meaningful, a time when they could be used but might not be available from external sources. (p. 755)

He maintains that because the children's memories are able to function in this manner, it assists them greatly to "overcome limitations of the somewhat random nature and ordering of experience on which children [they]have to base their learning" (p. 755).

Being read to regularly then, provides young children with a great variety of linguistic inputs which serve not only to develop their repertoire of oral language utterances, but also to make them familiar with the more complex structures of written language which they continue to assimilate in their existing schema. Their constant request to "read it again" after listening to a first reading of a story with great concentration, and their increasing participation in the rereading provides further evidence of "the often reported progression in childhood from a concern with sound to a concern with meaning" (Stross, 1978, p. 755). Their growing familiarity with a range of story schemata (Applebee, 1979), their experiences with the patterns of written language (Clark, 1976) and the existence in children of an auditory imagery (Stross, 1978), could make the process of assimilating their favourite stories a relatively simple task for them. Since the repetitive reading overcomes, to a certain extent, "the ephemerality of speech" this may explain Moerk's (1974) finding that "The language structure produced by the child in connection with these rhymes (which had been read and reread) were clearly more complex than in the child's own spontaneous production" (p. 102). But apart from contributing to their oral language development, what might the ability to reproduce their favourite stories through reading-like behaviour do for their reading development?

By being in the company of an adult who regularly provides a model of reading behaviour and by constantly associating books and reading with a pleasurable and desirable activity, young children would seem to be put in a state of disequilibrium in their environment as Piaget (1955) would suggest. Since most of them at this stage of their development, probably see reading a story and telling a story as identical processes, the way to achieve equilibration is to be able to retell their stories through a page matching reading-like behaviour (Clay, 1972). Their requests to "read it again" and their own self-initiated repetition of their stories would seem to provide a good example of Elkind's (1967) observation, already referred to in this review, as an "outward manipulation of an emerging cognitive ability and the need to realize that ability through action" (p. 543).

As their awareness of written language grows through their experience with environmental language (Goodman, Y., 1980; Mason, 1980) and through their continued experiences with books, they move from the more global page matching procedure of reproducing their stories, to attempting to match as accurately as possible, what they are saying with the print that is on the page (Clay, 1966, 1970, 1972; Gardner, 1970; Huey, 1908; Sartre, 1964; Shannon, 1977; Smith, 1963). Their "talking like a book" behaviour begins to incorporate voice and finger pointing strategies as they become increasingly aware of the graphic information on the page and its relationship to reading. As Gardner (1970) suggests, they begin to use their known stories to "investigate our written code." By having access to large "chunks" of written language which they can examine at their leisure, allows the widely accepted principle governing human learning, enunciated by Werner (1957) to begin to operate. He writes:

> It is an orthogenetic principle which states that whenever development occurs it proceeds from a state of relative globality and lack of differentiation to a state of increasing differentiation, articulation and hierarchic integration. (p. 126)

As a result of his studies, Lenneberg (1967) translated this orthogenetic principle into the field of language learning.

He states that:

> What is acquired are patterns and structures, not constituent elements .... (p. 281)
>
> We are discovering a basic process that is reflected in language as well as in many other aspects of behaviour. It consists of first grasping a whole that is subsequently further differentiated, each of the specifics arriving at different times and being subordinated to the whole by a process of temporal integration. (p. 296)

Although Lenneberg is referring here to oral language learning in particular, it would seem that through being provided with the opportunity to incorporate the various stages of reading-like behaviour into their repertoire of strategies for learning to deal with the language of their favourite stories, young children may well be able to utilize the principles enunciated by Werner and Lenneberg in learning to read.

The concept of reading-like behaviour appears to have a direct relevance for the kind of inquiry intended of the phenomena under investigation in this study. Although the presence of this behaviour in young children has been reported regularly in the literature examined for this review, few researchers have seen its apparent relationship to learning to read. One of the purposes of this study is to examine both the nature of the relationship and the possible origins of its development.

Linguistic Awareness and Learning to Read

By the time young children are read their first story or nursery rhyme they have usually become aware of the source of oral language which is used in their presence. They soon know that they can make various sounds which will attract attention and cause people around them to respond in a variety of ways. The initial functions of oral language are intuitively perceived and learned easily almost invariably - within social contexts.

Once children realize that the sounds they make can be used to fulfill various communicative functions which are important to them, they embark instinctively and rapidly on a process of constant practice and experimentation to gain control over this form of language. By so doing they are better able to employ their language as a functional tool to serve their various communicative needs.

But as language users, whether as speakers or listeners, children's attention is not on the sounds of speech, nor even on the larger units such as words or syntactic patterns. The focus of their attention is on meaning, or the intention of what they or someone else is trying to say. The language forms, Cazden (1975) suggests:

> ... are themselves transparent: we hear through them to the meaning intended. As the Duchess rightly says in *Alice in Wonderland*: "and the moral of *that* is -

> take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves." (p. 3)

Complicated patterns of sounds are composed seemingly automatically, articulated fluently into an idea, and interpreted by a listener. While there is still some way to go in establishing a comprehensive understanding how human beings learn to use oral language so skillfully, it is, as Cazden (1975) observes, "an indisputable fact that the processes usually do function successfully, and out-of-awareness, for adult and child alike" (p. 3).

This transparent or 'out-of-awareness' characteristic of oral language, is contrasted with what Cazden (1975) refers to as "metalinguistic awareness" (linguistic awareness) which she describes as "the ability to make language forms opaque and to attend to them in and for themselves" (p. 4). The ability to do this she sees as a particular kind of language performance and one that is less easily and less universally acquired than the language performance of speaking and listening. Cazden (1975) concluded that:

> Our concern as educators with this particular kind of language performance comes from increasing arguments that it is at least very helpful - and maybe critically important - not so much in primary processes of speaking and hearing as in what may be considered the derived or secondary processes of reading and writing. (p. 5)

Another linguist who has demonstrated an interest in the role and nature of linguistic awareness in learning to read is Mattingly (1972, 1978, 1979). He, along with Cazden, views reading as a secondary or derived process, dependent for its development on some undetermined level of oral language competence in the learner. In the following comment it can be seen that Mattingly (1979) also sees the concept of linguistic awareness playing a different role for written language learning than for oral language learning:

> ... while the primary linguistic activities of speaking and listening are natural in all normal human beings, secondary linguistic activities such as versification and reading, are parasitic on these primary activities, and require "linguistic awareness," a specially cultivated metalinguistic consciousness of certain aspects of primary linguistic activity. (p. 1)

Mattingly goes on to state that he now thinks that for reading, speaking and listening (he makes no reference to writing) "linguistic awareness is not a matter of consciousness, but of access" (p. 1). Although he never distinguishes between two types of listening or speaking, he proceeds to do so for reading. "Analytic" reading requires the reader to identify "written words in a sentence as corresponding to specific items in his mental lexion and makes a grammatical analysis, as a result of which he may be said to 'understand' the sentence" (p. 2). Since identifying words for Mattingly involves a form of "phonetic recoding," it can be assumed that he views learning to read as a process that requires conscious analysis.

of words and sentences based on a knowledge of a system of morphophonemic rules. The other form of reading he describes as "impressionistic." Here "the reader tries to guess the meaning of the text just by looking at the words, without making specific lexical identifications and without making a grammatical analysis" (p. 2). This form of reading then according to Mattingly, does not require the use of explicit linguistic analysis and, it is assumed, is similar to the process involved in the production and reception of oral language. "Impressionistic" readers do not need to be linguistically aware at the conscious level, of what they are doing.

The views of Cazden (1972, 1975) and Mattingly (1972, 1978, 1979) have been recorded here because they would appear to be representative of the views that many linguists hold with respect to the process of learning to read. They have usually seen reading as a secondary or derived process, "parasitic" on a certain (undetermined) level of oral language learning. Because of its secondary or derived nature it cannot be learned like oral language is learned, without formal instruction and since written language is governed by a system of rules, these have to be taught to children in some pre-determined sequence by someone who knows them. In order to profit from this teaching, children have to learn the language of reading instruction and to understand at an explicit level, what it is they are trying to learn. Since reading is seen as a specific skill to be learned, the first stage in the process (after oral language has been learned) involves a cognitive phase, in which the learner comes to understand the nature of the task and develop concepts of its component parts (Fitts and Posner, 1967; Cronbach, 1970). The linguists then, generally would hold the view that the more linguistically aware children are, at a conscious level, of written language and of the processes involved in learning to read it, the more easily they will learn to read. For oral language learning however, they would express an opposite view, although it should be noted at this point that the Soviet linguists, Elkonin (1973) and Karpova (1977) see a need for children to be linguistically aware at the explicit level of certain features of language for both oral and written language learning.

The possible significance of a cognitive phase in which children come "to understand the nature of the task and develop concepts of its component parts" has been recognized only recently by researchers in the field of reading. Johns (1979) for example, in a selected bibliography on "Metalinguistic Awareness and Reading records a total of 36 references related to the topic and only two of these were published prior to 1966. A total of 29 of them have been published since 1970. Notable omissions from Johns' bibliography were those publications that have resulted from the studies conducted by Francis (1971, 1973, 1975, 1977) in England and Clay (1966, 1970, 1972) in New Zealand.

In examining the concept of linguistic awareness as it relates to learning to read, researchers have concentrated their attention on children's understanding of the specific terms that teachers use during reading instruction (e.g. word, letter, sound of a letter, first and last letter of a word), on children's knowledge of the conventions of print (e.g. directionality, matching word-space-word, upper and lower case letters, punctuation), and on the relationship between the children's acquisition of these understandings and skills and their progress on learning to read. The questions of how, when and why young children develop their knowledge of written language, whether this knowledge has to be at the implicit or explicit level, or whether, in learning to read without formal teaching, children need to be able to understand and use the language of reading instruction or to consciously analyze what they were doing, have never been examined by researchers in the field of reading. In discussing this point Francis (1979) for example, expresses the opinion that:

> ... It would seem to be the case that some children achieve an integration of tacit knowledge of structure in written and spoken forms without conscious analysis. The success of certain very good early readers spring to mind; and how far, and for what kinds of children, conscious analysis without and with help are needed seems to be at least as important a question for early reading instruction as any issue about method and materials. (p. 10)

One of the first studies which was aimed at examining children's understanding of some of the language of reading instruction and their expectancies of what was involved in learning to read, was Reid's (1966) much quoted investigation involving five year old children who had just entered school in Scotland. She found that these children showed a "general lack of any specific expectancies of what reading was going to be like, of what the activity consisted in, of the purpose and use of it" (p. 58). She also found that children were in a state of doubt and confusion over the concepts of a "word" and a "letter," calling letters "numbers" and words "names." Downing (1970) replicated Reid's study and confirmed her findings. In a later study Downing and Oliver (1974) reached similar conclusions and reported that children, even up to the age of eight years, still confused both isolated phonemes and syllables with words. They also showed that children up until the age of 6.5 years tend to confuse non-verbal sounds that are not readily identifiable, as well as phrases and sentences, with spoken words.

Working with a group of thirty Albertan children who were due to go into first grade in a few months time, Wilson (1973) determined that these children "tended to perceive words, syllables and phonemes at a very rudimentary level" (p. 92). She found also, that certain classes of these linguistic units were more "readily accessible than others" and that concrete aids could be employed in order to improve the recognition of these units. Wilson concluded that while such terms as "word" and "sound" were familiar to most children, their meaning is not entirely clear.

As part of a comprehensive study of the emergent reading behaviour of New Zealand children who were in their first two years at school, Clay (1972) reported the results of tests that asked them to "show the tester 'just one word,' 'just one letter and just the first letter of a word'" (p. 59), by sliding two masking cards across a line of print. In the "locating one word" task, 22 percent of the 5 year olds tested were successful, at 6 years, 47 percent succeeded and at 7 years, 91 percent could complete the task. The figures for the "locating a letter task" were similar with 34, 53, and 84 percent being successful at the three age levels, while those for the "locating the first letter in a word" were 28, 41 and 81 percent respectively. These results demonstrate that not only did approximately 60 percent of these children arrive at school not understanding the terms which would almost certainly be used with them during reading instruction early in their school careers, but that after two years of instruction in reading and other language arts 9 percent could still not locate a word, 16 percent could not locate a letter and 19 percent could not locate the first letter of a word. On the positive side however, Clay's results revealed that on the average, approximately one-third of the children had arrived at school able to complete these tasks. The longitudinal data from her study revealed that children who entered school with this kind of knowledge, tended to become what she called "high progress" readers, who learned to read easily and rapidly. On the other hand, those children who were lacking in these understandings and who were slow in developing them, were seen to be "at risk" in learning to read and generally made slow progress.

In a similar study conducted in England, Francis (1973) tested a group of 50 boys and girls on four occasions at six monthly intervals over a period of 18 months. The mean age level of the group at the start of the investigation was 5 years 9 months, and at the conclusion 7 years 3 months. The sample was deliberately chosen to represent children of a good social background and with more than average ability. Francis tested the children's reading progress, their understanding of the concepts "letter," "word," and "sentence," their ability to identify suffixes by sound and by sight and their general understanding of concepts.

As a result of her study Francis confirmed the previous findings of Reid (1966), Clay (1966, 1972) and Downing (1970) concerning "children's difficulties in expressing understanding of the terminology used in teaching reading" (p. 23). She noted that their increased experience in reading helped them to resolve their difficulties. From an examination of the correlational data obtained from the study, Francis observed that:

> The difficulties, however, are attributed not so much to the abstract nature of the concepts, for understanding of the technical vocabulary correlated more with reading skill than with general vocabulary; rather were they attributed to complexity, for "reading" covers a wide range of reference, and "word," "sentence," "letter" and "sound" are related concepts with considerable areas of overlap in meaning. (p. 123)

In examining the children's responses to the question, she reached the conclusion, that although they had never thought to analyze speech, as a result of being taught to read, the children were being forced to recognize units and subdivisions of written language and to learn the meanings of the terms that described them. Francis concluded that "... difficulty in comprehending the technical vocabulary of reading instruction appears to be an integral part of the difficulty of learning to read, rather than a separate conceptual difficulty" (p. 23).

More recently, studies conducted by Ayers and Downing (1979) in Canada and by Johns (1980) in the United States confirmed the findings of Clay (1972) and Francis (1973), that children who have mastered the technical terms used in reading instruction are generally more successful in learning to read during their primary and grade one years at school than those children who have difficulty with these terms. Ayers and Downing concluded for example, that the results of their study provided "empirical evidence of the significance of linguistic awareness in predicting reading achievement at the end of Grade 1" (p. 1). As well as finding that his above-average readers were superior to his below-average readers in letter and word concepts, Johns determined that they were also superior in their knowledge of and skill in print-direction concepts. As a result of his study he concluded that:

> This finding suggests that factors other than age may influence or affect the acquisition of print-related concepts. Is the child's understanding of print-related concepts a cause or a consequence of his/her reading achievement? Perhaps Ehri (1979) is correct in stating that awareness of concepts about print may interact with the reading acquisition process so that it exists as both a consequence of what has occurred as a cause of further progress in reading. (p. 547)

Another area of children's linguistic awareness that has been the focus of a number of investigations, has been their ability to recognize that in written language, words on a page are separated by spaces (Clay, 1972; Downing, 1972; Evans, 1974; Holden and MacGinitie, 1972; Huttenlocher, 1964; Johns, 1979; Karpova, 1966; McNinch, 1974; Mickish, 1974). The results of these studies, like the others that have been reported in this review, indicate that young children experience great difficulty in dividing a sentence into word units and generally fail to see that words on a page are indeed separated by white spaces. Mickish (1974) found for example, that even after nine months of instruction in Grade 1 "when it could be safely assumed that 'word' had been referred to hundreds of times, almost 50 percent of the subjects in this study (n=117) did not mark six correct words even though these same words had been taught to them early in the school year and read frequently throughout the year" (p. 21). And like the results of previous studies reviewed, children's awareness of the aural word boundaries, was found by McNinch (1974) to be a significant predictor of reading achievement. Johns (1979) also found a similar relationship in his study, and as a result of her longitudinal study, Clay (1966) determined that the ability of children to match exactly with their finger what was on the page with what was being read to them, was a clear indication of a high level of "print awareness" on their part.

While all of the studies reported have found that many young children lacked important knowledge and understanding of a wide range of language and reading concepts, they also revealed that there was always a proportion of children in each of the studies who had acquired these important concepts. As has already been reported for example, 48 percent of five year olds in the Clay (1972, p. 59) study could match word-space-word accurately with their finger when a story was read to them on entry to school. Thirty-four percent could locate one letter, 22 percent could locate one word and 28 percent could locate the first letter in a word. Many of these children could also identify the front and back of a book, where a story started in a book, and knew that the print proceeded across and down the pages in a regular fashion.

In a similar study involving four year old kindergartners in New Zealand, Barney (1976) examined the possession of book-related concepts by these young children. Although the sample in this study was biased, with a much higher percentage of children coming from the high and middle socio-economic section of the population, his findings are, nevertheless interesting and relevant. Barney found, for example, that 87 percent of his 117 four year old children knew that books were used for reading, that 80 percent could identify the front of a book accurately, and when asked to point out on a page carrying both print and picture, that part of the page which is read, 63 percent were able to do so. Again, when asked which way on the page one reads, 59 percent pointed from left to right although not all kept to the line, and 43 percent were able to indicate that in reading one goes from the end of one line to the beginning of the next. Barney tested the children's acquisition of a wide range of skills and concepts related to reading and found that these four year old children had learned a surprising amount. He concluded that this was an outcome of their being read to regularly, both in the home and in their kindergartens and of their general experience with books in their every day play.

Despite the fact that numerous researchers have commented on the importance of the development of children's linguistic awareness in learning to read, it may be however, that the major reason for children to gain explicit, conscious awareness of these reading concepts and the verbal labels which accompany them, is a product of school reading instruction. In order to teach reading, using the most common present day methodologies, teachers frequently have to use these verbal labels and so children have to learn this language if they are to understand what their teachers are asking them to do. Because current methodologies tend to emphasize an approach to reading instruction that is strongly analytical, children have to learn how to consciously analyze language and then reconstruct it. "This is not to say" as Francis (1975) suggests, "that such an analytic approach is necessary for learning to read - some younger children begin to learn without it - but any instruction that utilizes a technical vocabulary induces and depends on such an approach" (p. 152).

But in asking young children to concentrate their attention on the finer elements of language so that what they have to deal with no longer has any meaning for them, teachers may be placing demands on them that many of them are unable to cope with cognitively. Apart from the abstractness of the task which Vygotsky (1962) saw as a major difficulty in learning to deal with written language, according to a study conducted by Gerth (1969), children are unable to distance themselves from their language and examine it consciously as a thing apart until they are nine or ten years of age. Although Gerth's research was based on oral language the results of the studies reviewed in this section would seem to indicate that his conclusions may well apply to learning to read. Wardaugh (1971) for example, in pointing out how methods of teaching reading at the "beginning" stages are almost totally unrelated to theories of language acquisition states that:

> Both phonics and whole word methods depend on certain language abilities which all children of six have. What they might not have are some of the cognitive abilities that the methods require: abilities to make certain kinds of discriminations, to form generalizations, and to verbalize knowledge. Furthermore, much of what is taught "about" language in such methods is antiquated and not very much use to anyone, particularly to six year olds. (pp. 6-179)

The motivating force that constantly moves children to continue their drive to master the complexities of oral language would seem to be, in Halliday's (1975) view, a striving to "learn how to mean" with increasing degrees of clarity and ease. Regular exposure and use in a variety of social settings appear to be the necessary conditions for growth to continue. Any attempt to have children bring to a level of conscious awareness what it is they are learning, tends to interfere with the process. By providing them with similar conditions with written language, through regular shared book experiences, and by encouraging them to follow the advice of the Duchess to "take care of the sense," young children may be provided with the opportunity to begin to inspect the features of written language and to learn "how it works."

One of the purposes of this study is to obtain detailed information concerning the development of preschool children's linguistic awareness, to examine how their experiences with various forms of written language might contribute to this development, and to attempt to determine how their level of awareness of the features and functions of this written language appears to contribute to the growth of their emergent reading behaviours.

Learning Oral and Written Language

Throughout this review a number of references have been made to the remarkable ability that young children demonstrate in learning the oral dimensions of their language. Although, several grammatical developments occur during the years that follow six (Chomsky, 1969; Kessel, 1970; Menyuk, 1969), by the time children enter school, they have usually mastered the expressive and receptive aspects of oral language to the point where they can communicate with skill and fluency. As a result of a careful study of how children develop this level of mastery during their preschool years, Newman (1980) was able to arrive at the following characteristics of this learning:

> ... language learning begins with immersion in an environment in which language is being used in purposeful ways. The environment is emulative rather than instructive, providing examples of language in action. What aspect of the task will be experimented with, at what pace, and for how

> long is determined largely by the child. The experimentation with language occurs whether or not an adult is attending, and tends to continue until essential aspects of the task are under comfortable control. The environment is secure and supportive, providing help on call. The child's approximations result in expansions on the basis of shared meaning. Development tends to proceed continuously in an orderly sequence marked by considerable differences from individual to individual. (pp. 11-12)

Further, as Forester and Mickelsen (1979) suggest, "In the home, children are trusted to learn ... There is no felt need to provide them with rules and regulations" (p. 77). And since there are no predetermined sets of objectives and the emphasis is on the meaning of any communication rather than its form, all efforts to produce language by the children are usually responded to positively and often with enthusiasm. Finally the learning takes place without any attempt to have the children understand what they are doing at a level of conscious awareness.

The majority of linguists would agree with Lenneberg (1967), that the ability to learn language is innate and part of the biological inheritance of children, although not all would agree with his theory of how they actually go about learning it. Except for those who follow the behaviourist view of language acquisition espoused by Skinner (1957), most linguists would also agree that learning the oral dimensions of their language for children is a natural developmental task, the characteristics of which are very much like those outlined by Newman (1980).

The learning of written language however is usually viewed by most linguists quite differently. Like Cazden (1975) and Mattingly (1972, 1978, 1979), they see written language learning and learning to read in particular, as a secondary or derived task. Since the ability to learn written language is not a biologic given, according to the linguists it lacks the primary, developmentally based drives to direct and initiate learning within the organism, even when given suitable stimuli from the environment. The development of literacy then, is seen as an externally imposed task, something that has to be taught rather than something that can be learned through the self-directed efforts of the learner. Those who hold to this view according to Goodman and Goodman (1978), see learning to read, for example "as not natural [their emphasis] like listening, but a deliberate, conscious, academic achievement dependent on awareness of certain aspects of oral language" (p. 9). This view of learning to read leads such a noted linguist as Wardaugh (1971) to observe that "The theories of language acquisition that are available to us today are largely irrelevant in deciding issues in beginning reading instruction or even in devising models of the reading process" (pp. 6-179).

The view of Wardaugh (1971), that "language acquisition and learning to read are quite different tasks" (pp. 6-179) seems to have been derived primarily from his understanding of how reading is being taught rather than how it could be learned, given different circumstances. Whereas Wardaugh sees oral language as something that is acquired gradually, with no conscious beginning point for the learner, he sees that "learning to read has a sudden onset for children" (pp. 6-177) with them being required to rather abruptly, put a range of cognitive and motor skills together in a formal school setting. He sees the "level of anxiety in the context in which learning to read takes place" (pp. 6-177) as being quite high on the part of the parent, teacher and child because of the ever present possibility of failure and the subsequent allocation of blame. The opposite conditions however, are seen to prevail in learning to talk with "failure" seldom being thought of and if difficulty does occur, assistance is sought without blame being attached to anyone. Whereas reading instruction is seen as being "very formal and deliberate" by Wardaugh, oral language is "learned informally and unconsciously" with no deliberate instruction being necessary. "[Oral] language is not learned from programmed stimuli, from making conscious distinctions among stimuli, from learning 'about' language, and from requiring control of a variety of analytic and synthetic techniques" (pp. 6-177). By implication it is assumed that Wardaugh believes that the process of reading is learned in this way.

The conclusion that learning oral language follows one set of principles and that learning written language follows a quite different set has been challenged recently by a number of researchers in the field of reading. Soderbergh (1978), working from the hypothesis that learning language, whether oral or written, followed the same principles provided similar conditions prevailed, had 40 severely deaf preschool children aged three to six years, learn to read and write successfully. These children had no oral language at the beginning of the programme, but when their progress in learning to talk was compared with a similar group of children who had not received the same opportunity to learn written language, it was found that the oral language development of the experimental group of children was superior to that of those in the control group. In this situation then learning written language facilitated the learning of oral language. Weekes (1979) in commenting on the programme, pointed out that:

> Before embarking on this program, Soderbergh (1976) and her associates had taught a number of children, aged eighteen months to five years, some normal, some severely hearing impaired and two "totally deaf," to read. (p. 516)

Another study which demonstrated that learning to read is not dependent on some predetermined level of oral language acquisition was that conducted by Steinberg and Steinberg (1975). This husband and wife team began to teach their son Kimio to read as soon as he indicated that he had some degree of receptive language. They started when he was six months of age with the letters of the alphabet but moved to whole words at ten months. At eighteen months he was introduced to his first sentence in the form of a question which indicated that he understood a number of the words, although he could not say them all. At two years of age Kimio could recognize and understand 48 words although he was found to be able to say only fifteen of them with sufficient clarity so that a member of the family could recognize them. Kimio continued to progress in his learning to read and by three and one half years was reading short sentences fluently and was beginning to recognize words that he had not been taught. Despite the fact that his parents had never attempted to teach their son sound values of letters he began to generate his own rule system for this aspect of written language. He was tested on a standardized reading test before he was five and achieved at beyond the grade three level. He continued to make rapid progress and to score well above his age level on reading tests after he went to school. His attitude towards reading was found to be always extremely positive.

The most significant feature of this study then, was not that Kimio learned to read early and continued to progress rapidly, but that his ability to read some words preceded his ability to produce them in speech correctly. The results of the study demonstrated quite graphically, that learning to read is not dependent on some predetermined level of achievement in learning to speak.

Although there are some obvious differences between oral and written language (Vygotsky, 1962; Wardaugh, 1971) it would seem that the acquisition of the two codes does not necessarily need to be different. According to Goodman (1970) and Smith (1973), oral and written language have a similarity of function in communication of information, and they rely on the synthesis of ideas by the speaker or reader through the activation of a "mental mechanism for understanding language." Both language modes require a large sample of language for the inductive development of principles related to structure and function of language elements and both depend on past experience for meaning which is derived from a connected flow of linguistic information, rather than from individual language units. Both seem to depend on an intuitive awareness on the part of the user of the processes involved in receiving or giving messages, and any attempt to bring these processes to a level of conscious awareness while using them tends to cause meaning to be lost and even destroyed altogether. For the messages to be fully comprehended, an inner motivation to attend to them is required for both language modes.

In discussing the similarities and differences between written and oral language Holdaway (1979) makes the point that:

> Written language is a graphic system based on speech in that it uses the same semantic systems

> to convey meaning. Written English is therefore the same language in a fundamental sense as spoken English. No new semantic system must be learned in order to use written English. (p. 83)

Since the syntactic and semantic systems of the English language are already linked, the only major differences between the two modes of language lie in the way in which they are usually received and expressed and in the situational contexts within which this occurs. Whereas for example, readers have to create the experience they are reading about from their own imaginations and have few visual props to assist them in this process, listeners are actually in the situation where the language being heard is being created. To assist them to understand the message more clearly they have the speaker's intonations, gestures, facial expressions and the like as aids to meaning.

In his challenge to those who would see early acquisition of oral language as natural and automatic, when compared with the acquisition of literacy as being "artificial and unnatural-and must therefore be taught" (p. 20), Holdaway (1979) is very clear and forthright:

> First, the onus of proof that acquiring spoken language is not [his emphasis] like other forms of learning lies with the protestors, and nowhere have they achieved this. ... Secondly, we cannot be justified in dismissing the relevance of early language acquisition for literacy learning unless we have assured ourselves by extensive and rigid trials that literacy cannot be acquired in the same manner. Such trials have never been conducted, but there is a wealth of evidence which we will study later indicating that literacy skills develop in the

> same 'natural' way as spoken language when conditions for learning are comparable. (p. 20)

The "evidence" that Holdaway refers to is a detailed description of the implementation of an apparently highly successful language arts programme, which used as its basic theoretical framework, the view that oral and written language learning follow the same principles. He also examined the behaviour of some preschool children in book experience situations, and through an analysis of transcripts made of the interactions which occurred between the children, their parents and their books, was able to conclude that:

> In this developmental setting we have a further model for literacy learning consistent in every way with the model derived from learning spoken language. It is based on the learning behaviours and strategies actually demonstrated in the learning of many high progress school beginners and in the majority of cases where children learn to read and write before school entry. (p. 61)

Two other writers in the field of reading who have become convinced, through their own research into the nature of the reading process and how it is learned, that oral and written language involve the same principles, are Goodman and Goodman (1978). They comment that:

> Children learn to read and write in the same way and for the same reasons that they learn to speak and listen. The way [their emphasis] is to encounter language in use as a vehicle of communicating meaning. The reason is need [their emphasis]. Language learning whether oral or written is motivated by a need to communicate, to understand and be understood. (p.3)

> ... Our contention is that we can explain both acquisition and lack of acquisition of literacy in terms of the internalization of the functions of written language by children. (p. 8)

In his explorations of the development of language from a socio-linguistic point of view, Halliday (1969) observes that "What is common to every use of language is that it is meaningful, contextualized and in the broadest sense social" (p. 26). In order to operate fully as a problem solving individual within this social context, children begin to use language to serve their evolving needs. Language learning becomes part of a series of intrinsically motivated, developmental tasks, the learning of which contributes to their "progressive mastery of a functional potential" (Halliday, 1975, p. 242). The process begins with children "mastering certain basic functions of language, each one having a small range of alternatives or 'meaning potential' associated with it" (p. 244). These basic functions of language Halliday (1975) sees operating as a hierarchy, with each one assuming prominence for the child in a particular order. He lists them in the following order:

Instrumental	I want
Regulatory	Do as I tell you
Interactional	Me and you
Personal	Here I come
Heuristic	Tell me why
Imaginative	Let's pretend
Informative	I've got something to tell you

(p. 244)

At this early "functional origins" stage, the children's utterances, although meaningful to them and those around them, have "no linguistic 'form' or grammar" (p. 260). In order to "learn how to mean" with increasing effectiveness however, a grammar begins to be constructed during the next phase (Phase II: The Transition) of language development, as a functional necessity. In their striving to learn how the world around them functions and how they are supposed to function in it, children begin to use language "mathetically." For the purpose of satisfying their own needs and to control and to interact with others, their language use also takes on a "pragmatic" function. Grammar increases their ability to use language for these key functional needs and along with this grows the need for the development of a wider vocabulary and an ability to handle dialogue. Once these features of their language system have evolved (because of what they had to do) the transition to the adult language system has been completed. Halliday (1975) concludes:

> By the end of Phase II, the child has entered the adult language. He has built up a system that is multi-stratal (content, form, expression) and a multifunctional (ideational, interpersonal, textual). From this point on, he is adding to what he already has. He has learnt how [his emphasis] to mean; his language development now consists in extending the range of his meaning potential to broader cultural horizons. (p. 263)

It is only after this final stage of development has been achieved, in Halliday's view, that children can begin to examine the form of their language as a result of their mastery over the mathetic functions which had lead them to become aware of themselves and their language.

This very brief overview of Halliday's theory of oral language development provides a useful framework from which to examine written language development, and in particular, learning to read. There would appear to be three major features of this theory which seem particularly relevant to learning to read: the dominant role that he gives to meaning; the importance of children learning the functions of language (and at the same time to function more effectively in their world) through using language; and the fact that attention cannot begin to be given to the form of language until the learner has internalized all its functions and is a skilled user of that language.

As a result of taking a three and one half year old boy on a tour of a department store, observing him and interacting with him in relation to his reactions to the environmental language available in the store, Smith (1976) reached several conclusions concerning the onset of reading:

> The first is that children probably begin to read from the moment they become aware of print in a meaningful way, and the second is that the roots of reading are discernable whenever children strive to make sense of print, before they are able to recognize many of the actual words.
>
> Third, not only are the formal mechanics of reading unnecessary in these initial stages, they may well be a hindrance. It is the ability of

> children to make sense ... that will enable them to make use of the mechanics ... . Fourth, words, do not need to be in sentences to be meaningful, they just have to be in a meaningful context ... . (pp. 297-299)

From her longitudinal observational study of her own daughter's literacy development, Rhodes (1979) saw meaning as being the major factor that kept Kara interested in written language and self-directing her own efforts to master it. She writes:

> Children's attitudes towards written language set the stage for life long learning about written language. But those attitudes are formulated, I believe, largely as a result of some important insights that children must make about written language: first, written language communicates meaning and second, the meaning it communicates has personal relevancy. Written language is important to Kara because she expects it to be meaningful and to be personally relevant. (p. 12)

This same concern for meaning was seen by Forester (1975) during her longitudinal observational study of first grade children being taught to read in an elementary school in British Columbia. She concluded, as a result of her investigation that beginning readers structure written language to fit their own linguistic and cognitive development, just as they structure oral language. She found, for example, that when the style of the text did not fit the young readers,' they converted it. If the names for concrete referents differed from those they commonly use, they supplied their own. The young readers, Forester claims, search for meaning in their own way and are not concerned with the precise configuration of letters, words or sentences. She comments that:

> ... the most striking discovery of this study is that a child intuitively adopts the strategies which mark the proficient reader: looking for meaning, drawing upon the structures of language to guide him, and using a flexible approach to reading. It does appear, therefore, that given the opportunity, children have the capacity to become natural readers much like they become natural speakers. The strategies required and used by the children are very similar for both learning processes. (p. 73)

Just as in Halliday's model of oral language learning then, meaning can be seen to play the central role in the young child's literacy learning. Even the children involved in Forester's study consistently used meaning, despite the fact that the teacher was using instructional procedures which tended to distract them from this source of assistance.

Although oral language becomes a tool that young children begin to use functionally very early in their lives since it is something that serves a range of vital needs, written language does not have the same immediate relevancy for them. Books however, through the children's requests for stories to be read and reread can serve the "instrumental" or "I want" mode of Halliday's (1975) hierarchy of functions of language. But books can serve a wider functional purpose than this since the power of written language can stimulate children's imaginations until they are drawn completely into the story itself. As Holdaway (1979) suggests:

> At their best, as seen in children's favourite literature, stories display all the functions of language in natural operation, and allow children to identify with the purposes of a recorded language. It is not only the listening to stories that is important in this sense: probably of greater importance is the way children enter into the story world expressively [his emphasis] as they repeat, re-enact, read again, or live out in many expressive modes the story language which fulfills multiple functions in their experience. (p. 149)

The multi-functional view of meaning as outlined by Halliday then, is well catered for through the bedtime story situation. But as well as this, books themselves would seem to be able to become objects which satisfy basic human needs for warmth, affection and security. By constantly experiencing these kinds of feelings as they are read to, books may be able to function as sources for this kind of experience for children, even without the parent being present. Apart from being able to serve these emotional needs, books can come to be recognized as sources of enjoyment, information, excitement, fear and fun and even though the experience is generally non-situational or vicarious in nature. Finally, through repeated readings of favourite stories, children are provided with the opportunity to make the book their own through reading-like behaviour, thereby serving the need young children have, to gain further control of the world around them. Through the medium of books then, written language comes to serve some very important functions for young children. As they become increasingly aware of its presence, the drive to master its complexities may well be able to develop as an intrinsically felt need, similar to that which motivates them to learn oral language.

The opportunity for children to gain experience with written language being used functionally in a more directly relevant sense, lies in the language of the environment. Reference has already been made (Mason, 1980; Goodman, 1980) to its possible role in contributing to children's growing awareness of written language and its uses. Logos for fast food outlets, soft drink labels, gas station signs, the abundance of road signs and the "language of supermarkets" all provide the young child with experience in using written language at Halliday's instrumental and regulatory levels in particular. Written language in television commercials function at these levels as well but they sometimes serve in addition, strong interactional and heuristic functions. Torrey (1969) found of course, that this source of highly contextualized written language was sufficient for one preschool child to learn to read. As Goodman and Goodman (1976) suggest then:

> We must focus more and more attention on how written language is used in society because it is through the relevant use of language that children will learn it. They will learn it because it will have meaning and purpose to them. Written language, too, can then fit into Halliday's statement that what is common to every use of language is that it is meaningful, contextualized and social. (p. 12)

Another important source of experience with written language for young children is the actual writing activities of parents and older siblings in the home and the children's own attempts to write themselves. In a study in which she examined the reading and oral English language skills of Pakeha (indigenous white), Maori (indigenous native but English speaking) and Samoan (immigrant native and learning English) children in New Zealand, Clay (1976) found that "While every Samoan group had the poorest average scores on each language test at every age, the Maoris had the poorest reading averages" (p. 337). The Samoan group performed at approximately the same level as the average Pakeha group in reading. Considering the fact that most of the Samoan children had only recently arrived in New Zealand and were still learning to speak English, the results seemed somewhat surprising.

One of the reasons for their performance in reading given by Clay, was their interest in learning to write. A Sunday School teacher commented to her that "... my four year old Samoan children who come to Sunday School all want to write. They take the pencils and paper and write. The Pakeha children don't" (p. 341). The only reason that Clay could determine for this strong orientation towards writing on the part of these children, lay in the fact that they would frequently see their parents reading letters received from relatives in Western Samoa and then writing letters back to them. A ship would arrive from that area bringing mail for the families. These would be read in the presence of the whole family and then there would be a frantic rush to reply to them before the ship left on its return journey. By being part of this whole process, Clay believed that these children came to value writing and to see how it functioned for communicative purposes.

The studies of early readers have also revealed that these children frequently displayed a great interest in learning to write. Durkin (1966) for example, described the early readers in her New York study as "pencil and paper kids." Durkin's observations concerning the development of this interest is of particular relevance to this study. She commented on how the children's curiosity about written language appeared to originate in their scribbling and drawing and how this moved to copying. Once the letters of the alphabet started to be copied the "almost inevitable request was, 'Show me my name.'" This interest grew to copying everybody in the family's name, which then led to long-term projects such as making and remaking calendars and address books which took a great deal of energy. Durkin concluded: "What all of this emphasized is that preschool interest in reading very often develops from a prior interest in copying and writing" (p. 108). Plessas and Oakes (1964), and Clark (1976) also report that many of their early readers were early writers and Torrey (1969) observed that her early readers "enjoyed writing and spent much time printing words and numbers" (p. 551). Perhaps, as Holdaway suggests, young children "need to 'babble' with a pencil for some time before we should expect genuine print forms to be learned and explored" (1979, p.16).

The effects of learning to write on learning to read appear to be positive, and in the early stages at least, may be very important. As a result of a study conducted to examine the effects of writing on reading Gillooly (1973) concluded that the influence was greatest when the child was learning to read but that "once the reading skill has been acquired, writing system characteristics no longer exert any appreciable influence on the act of reading" (p. 195). This result appears to have been confirmed by a study cited by Clay (1976) in her book What Did I Write. She states:

> Robinson (1971) using a large battery of tests and relating these to longitudinal records of reading progress between 5 and 6 years found that her measure of writing vocabulary was such a good predictor of reading progress in some New Zealand schools that it dwarfed the significance of other test variables previously described as important by Clay (1972). (p. 70)

Robinson had asked the children to "think of all the words you know how to write and then write them all down for me." There may be some value then in examining the proposal made by Carol Chomsky (1973) that learning to write should precede learning to read. By so doing, she claims, children could become actively involved in teaching themselves to read. The research of Read (1971) has demonstrated very clearly that once children know the letter names and how to form the letters, they are quite capable of beginning to generate their own rules for categorizing speech sounds and arriving at an orderly system of writing.

The physical act of writing then would seem to be able to play two major roles in the process of learning to read. By seeing written language being produced for communicative purposes through notes, personal letters and the like, young children are provided with the opportunity to see its relevance and its use more clearly. All of Halliday's (1975) functions of language can be experienced in a concrete way by producing writing of their own, they are provided with an excellent opportunity to direct their attention to the form of written language, and so contribute to their "linguistic awareness" development. As Clay (1976) suggests:

> The child who engages in creative writing (or any kind of writing) is manipulating the units of written language - letters, words, sentence types - and is likely to be gaining some awareness of how these can be combined to convey unspoken messages. The child is having to perform within the directional constraints that we use in written English. ... (Creative) writing demands that the child pay attention to the details of print. To put his messages down in print he is forced to construct words, letter by letter, and so he becomes aware of letter features and letter sequences, particularly for the vocabulary which he uses in his writing again and again. (p. 2)

It would seem then, that the major features of Halliday's theory of language development may indeed be just that, when "language development" includes both oral and written language. The principles and processes involved in "learning how to mean" may be similarly relevant to learning to read. By constantly immersing children in written language that is "meaningful, contextualized and in the broadest sense social" so that this form of language can become truly functional for them in a developmental sense, they may be provided with the opportunity to learn to read as Huey (1908) suggests, by "... grow[ing] into it as they learned to talk, with no special instruction or purposed method, and usually such readers are the best and most natural readers of all" (p. 339).

Summary

A recurring theme throughout this review of the relevant literature and research for this study has been to refer to the apparent ease with which preschool children master the complexities of oral language in the space of a few short years. In order to find out how they went about this task, linguists such as Bloom, 1970; Braine, 1963; Brown and Bellugi, 1964; Cazden, 1970; Chomsky, 1967; Ferguson and Slobin, 1973; Halliday, 1969; Lenneberg, 1967; and Miller and Ervin, 1964, took their tape recorders and note pads and went into the homes of very young children. They observed and recorded these children as they engaged in the process of learning to speak and listen to their language.

All of these studies of language development involved small numbers of children. Some of them were conducted over a relatively short period of time of just a few months, while others extended over a period of years. The results of these studies and others, have constantly provided detailed information and new insights concerning the processes involved in learning to speak and of the stages children seem to go through the world over, in their movement towards a relatively sophisticated level of mastery of their spoken language by the time they go to school. The researchers, as a result of their studies, consistently reflected the expression of wonderment recorded by Braine (1973) when he stated "that a structure of such enormous formal complexity as language is so readily learned by organisms whose available intellectual resources appear in other respects quite limited" (p. 407). Except that the study being reported in this dissertation involves the written language development of preschool children, it would seem to have similar goals to those studies of the linguists. Since these have yielded so much valuable data about language learning, it would appear entirely appropriate that similar research methodology to the one used by the linguists, should be employed for collecting the data for this study.

Another theme of this review has been to examine the nature of written language and to draw attention to the possibility that its learning may well involve similar processes to oral language learning, provided that similar conditions are present in the children's environment and experience. A plentiful supply of books with a parent who is prepared to read and reread appears to be an essential source of this experience. Access to environmental language, again with an accompanying adult who makes some use of it from time to time, provides further experience for the child with the functional nature of written language. Finally, the production of written language in their presence and the opportunity to experiment with producing it themselves, supplies them with a valuable source for developing an understanding of the communicative nature of written language and the chance to become increasing aware of its form. If this range of experiences are provided, then, it would seem possible that children may be able to begin to learn written language at the same time and in the same way as they learn oral language. This study will examine this possibility.

The overall theme of this review has been to view young children as efficient language learners, whose inner drive to achieve competence and to gain control over their environment can include written language, provided it becomes, like oral language, an integral part of their experience. If their environment is a book oriented one, the research data presented in this chapter would seem to indicate that young children have the potential to learn a great deal about written language and how it works during their preschool years. They seem able to develop attitudes towards books and reading for example, that could be a positive influence in their future development as readers. Their attention span for listening to stories appears surprisingly long and through regular experiences with written language in this way they are provided with the opportunity to learn where to look and what to look at on the printed page. It would appear that the development of an inner drive to master print for themselves may also result from frequent, warm, shared experiences with their books.

Through their regular experience with books, young children could become as familiar with the patterns of written language as they are with the patterns of oral language and could begin to build a variety of schema for the different kinds of stories they listen to. The appearance of reading-like behaviour with favourite stories, resulting from their apparent inner need for repetition and their possible possession of an auditory equivalent of an eidetic memory may provide them with the opportunity to begin to inspect the language of their books more carefully. Through this, and an ever-widening experience with written language, they could become increasingly aware of the conventions of print and of course, more "linguistically aware." The development of this considerable range of skills, understandings and attitudes in children, is what Holdaway (1979) refers to as a "set towards literacy" or a "literacy set" (p. 49). It is the major focus of this study to examine, through ethnographic procedures, the development of this "set towards literacy" in preschool children, as it occurs.

A survey of the relevant literature has revealed that the development of literacy in young children has been studied primarily through the retrospective studies of early readers. Another source of information has come from the typical, behavioural-measurement-type studies that have been directed at determining what children do or do not know (and usually the latter) about written language, after they have gone to school. Some studies have been reported of parents who have taught their own children to read (Callaway, 1974; Steinberg and Steinberg, 1975) and some parents have observed their own children engaged in literacy learning within their homes (Bissex, 1979; Rhodes, 1979). Only one study of an ethnographic type has been examined where the researcher obtained her data through observation and participant observation of young children engaged in the process of learning to read in school. This was the highly significant study conducted by Forester (1975) where she examined the reading development of Grade 1 children in a British Columbian school. In this she recommended that an investigation be conducted "of children learning to read in a setting where oral language learning conditions are simulated ... to validate the parallels which appear to exist between the learning children use in learning to speak and read as described in study" (p. 10). To date, to the best of this investigator's knowledge, no such study has been conducted.

Given the dearth of evidence available concerning the learning of written language without instruction, this study - which is based in the naturalistic setting of the home - should contribute to the body of knowledge concerning the processes involved in learning to read and could provide the basis from which a more widely acceptable theory could be developed.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN, PROCEDURES AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Overview

In this chapter the study is described and the rationale for its design is outlined. This is followed by a description of the subjects, a listing of the specific problems to be investigated, an account of the assumptions underlying the research, and a statement of the limitations of the study. In subsequent sections there are descriptions of the types and sources of the data collected in the study, of the major research methodologies used, and of the three phases of the study including accounts of the research procedures used. The final section contains an outline of how the data is to be analyzed and reported.

Design

The investigation was planned as an ethnographic-type study, designed to facilitate the careful exploration and description of the emergent reading behaviour of preschool children occurring in the naturalistic setting of their homes. Ethnography was selected as the appropriate research methodology because it allowed for the careful study of individual children in a variety of settings using a variety of multiple data collection strategies. These strategies included the use of participant observation, the use of formal, informal, retrospective and introspective interviews, and the employment, on occasions throughout the study of a diagnostic instrument constructed by the investigator for the purpose of examining the range of concepts the children were developing in relation to reading and learning to read. The aim was to collect data on the process of learning to read as it was occurring in the naturalistic setting of the home so that account could be taken of all the interacting forces which were operating to effect its development.

The Subjects

The children chosen for this research had to meet certain general criteria. They had to be of preschool age (kindergarten was not classified as school) and it was essential that they were being read to regularly by their parents, both prior to and during the course of the data collecting process. Preference was given to children at different ages.

The Children and Their Parents

There were three families and four children involved in the study. Three of the children were girls and one was a boy. Gillian was 5 years 5 months old when the first data collecting visit was made to her home, although when she was seen for pilot study purposes she was 4 years 6 months. Kaaren was 4 years 5 months at the start of the visits and her brother Sean was 2 years 11 months. Jennifer was 3 years 5 months at the time the first visit was made to her home.

Gillian. Gillian was an extremely happy, outgoing girl who had an excellent command of language. She said her first recognizable word at ten months and walked at fourteen months. She had always maintained a good state of health and experienced no problems with her vision or hearing. She has one brother, Gregory, who was 1 year and 6 months older than she was. He had started to attend school in grade one, two months before the data collecting visits commenced. He had been reading independently before he went to school. A very good relationship existed between the brother and Gillian, although the brother exhibited a strong tendency to try and dominate and control his sister's behaviour, especially in book experience situations.

When the family lived in Edmonton, Gillian attended playschool everyday where a regular story-time session was conducted, but there was no formal instruction in reading.

The family returned to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island after the father had completed his doctoral studies at the University of Alberta. Gillian started attending afternoon kindergarten in Charlottetown when she was 5 years 3 months old. Again, regular story reading sessions were held and there was some attempt to teach the children rudimentary phonic skills on an incidental basis. They were also given the opportunity to learn to print their own names and a few other words and letters, although she had already acquired these skills before she started kindergarten.

Gillian had been read to from an early age on a very regular basis, but almost always in the company of her older brother. She had a plentiful supply of books in the home and the mother had recently started visiting the town library for a regular supply of books. Her home could be described as a book-oriented one and she had already established a very positive attitude towards books. She greatly enjoyed being read to.

Gillian's father was on the faculty of the University of Prince Edward Island while her mother held a nurse's diploma. During the period of the observational visits she was not working outside the home although while the family had lived in Edmonton she had worked full time at a hospital. Both parents therefore, could be considered as being well-educated. The investigator knew the family well and had visited their home several times in Edmonton.

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Kaaren. Kaaren was a bright, confident and talkative little girl who was very easy to get to know. She had maintained good health and had experienced no hearing difficulties. Just prior to the commencement of the observational visits to the home it had been found that she had only 10/20 vision in one of her eyes but no recommendation had been made for her to wear glasses. She had said her first recognizable word at 11 months and had walked at 13 months. Her brother Sean, was 1 year and 6 months younger than her.

When the family lived in Saskatoon, Kaaren had attended a church-run, nursery school where stories were read to the children on a regular basis. Occasionally she would take one of her own books to the school and the teacher would read it to the children. There was no formal instruction in reading or writing attempted at the school. Since the family had moved to Wolfville, Nova Scotia, she had not attended a school of any kind. Kaaren had been read to on a fairly regular basis since she was approximately a year old. She had an adequate supply of books in the home but the town library was poorly equipped with children's books and open only for short periods of time, so it was not visited. Her home could be described as moderately book-oriented. She enjoyed being read to and had a strong interest in books.

Kaaren and Sean's parents both held doctoral degrees and were on faculty at Acadia University, the father in the Economics Department and the mother in Mathematics. The family had a live-in baby sitter, who looked after the children during the daytime. The investigator had not met the family prior to the contact made to discuss the possibility of their joining the study.

Sean. Sean was the younger brother of Kaaren and was almost 3 years of age when the data gathering visits started to be made to his home. He was a friendly and open boy who was not as talkative as his sister. He had a good command of language, although his speech was not always clear and at times was difficult to understand. He walked at approximately 11 months and had said his first intelligible word at 13 months. He had experienced no major illness and had good hearing and vision. He had never attended any nursery or play school. Sean had been read to on a reasonably regular basis since he was 18 months old. He had access to the same moderate home library as Kaaren. He enjoyed being read to but had not developed as strong an interest in books as his sister.

Jennifer. Jennifer was 3 years 5 months old when the first visit was made to her home by the investigator. She was a shy but friendly girl who displayed a very good command of oral language. She had experienced no major illness and had no vision or hearing difficulties. Jennifer had said her first recognizable word at 11 months and had walked at 1 year and 2 weeks. She was initially uncommunicative in the presence of the investigator, but once the visits were held

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on a regular basis, her shyness disappeared and she became as talkative and as friendly as the other children involved in the study.

Jennifer had a brother Christopher, who was 18 months younger than she was. Initially he was going to be part of the study also, but due to the fact that he was not able to be seen with sufficient frequency in book experience situations, it was decided not to incorporate him into the investigation although some reference will be made to him when recording data obtained through observation sessions with Jennifer.

On three mornings a week, Jennifer was attending a nursery school. She had started going to it two months prior to the first visit to her home made by the investigator. Reading to the children was a regular part of the activities at the school and the children were asked to bring their own stories to school to be read to them. They were asked specifically not to bring stories "with a lot of words in them" and Jennifer was very careful apparently, to select books which were mostly pictures. She would frequently come home from school and retell the story that had been read to her. Jennifer had been read to from an early age on a very regular basis. She had access to a large home library and the father brought books from school to be read to her each evening. Her home could be described as extremely book-oriented and she was already exhibiting a strong interest in books and reading.

Both Jennifer's parents held university degrees and were teachers, the father being employed as the principal of an elementary school, although he had been a secondary school teacher, and the mother having taught for a number of years as elementary school teacher. The mother was not working outside the home during the course of the observational visits.

Summary

All the children in the study displayed an interest in books and reading, and all came from moderately to strongly book-oriented homes. They had all experienced good health and had well-developed oral language skills. They were being read to regularly by parents, all of whom could be described as being very well-educated. Finally, they were all of an age level which was suitable for the purposes of the study.

The Specific Problems

The specific problems to be investigated were related to four major questions but the nature of the study being conducted required that this list be kept open and flexible.

1. What are the characteristics of the parents' and their children's behaviours in shared book experience situations and how do these behaviours relate to the reading development of the children?

   When did the parents first start reading to their children?

Why did the parents start reading to their children?

How do the children react to being read to?

What is the frequency and the duration of the shared reading experiences and what influences the frequency and the duration of these experiences?

What provision is made for reading materials in the home?

How are specific books selected for the shared reading experiences?

What effect does the presence of an older sibling have on the nature of the shared book experiences?

How does the physical position of the book, the parent, and the children affect the nature of the shared reading experience?

What are the characteristics of the parents' reading behaviours and how do the children respond to these?

2. What are the characteristics of any reading-like behaviour as it occurs in the children and what is the contribution of this behaviour to their reading development?

When did any reading-like behaviour begin to occur in the children?

Why do the children learn to use reading-like behaviour?

How do the children learn to use reading-like behaviour?

What are the characteristics of reading-like behaviour?

How does reading-like behaviour contribute to the children's reading development?

What is the contribution of reading-like behaviour to the development of children's attitudes towards books and reading?

3. What is the nature and the extent of the relationship between the principles which function to govern oral language learning and those which govern learning to read?

   How do the conditions which are present in the shared book experience situation affect the reading development of the children and how are these conditions similar to those which are present for oral language learning?

   What is the effect of starting with whole, meaningful language in the form of the children's stories on their learning to read?

   What is the nature and the extent of the children's linguistic awareness concerning reading and how does this affect their progress in learning to read?

   How does the concept of "readiness" apply to oral language learning and learning to read?

4. What are the roles of environmental language and of learning to write in the reading development of the children?

   What is the extent of the children's knowledge of environmental language and what is the nature of the relationship between this knowledge and learning to read?

   What is the nature of the relationship between learning to write and learning to read?

Assumptions

This investigation of the development of reading behaviour in preschool children is based on the following substantive assumptions:

1. That the interactions which occur in the shared book experiences which take place between the parents and their children and the investigator and the children in the naturalistic settings of their homes will provide data which will enable the investigator to examine any reading development which results from these experiences.
2. That any reading-like behaviour which develops as a result of the shared book experiences which occur with the parents and their children and with the investigator and the children will provide data which will enable the investigator to examine the

nature of its development and its relationship to any reading development which is observed in children.

3. That the children's experience with and understanding of environmental language will provide the investigator with data which will allow him to examine the relationships and the contribution of this form of written language to learning to read.
4. That the children's experience with and understanding of the processes involved in learning to write will provide the investigator with data which will allow him to examine the relationship between learning to write and learning to read.

The following two assumptions in the study pertained to methodological issues:

1. That the various dimensions of the participant observation of parent/child and investigator/child interactions in book experience situations, will provide the opportunity to audiotape record legitimate and effective data from which to study the reading development of the children involved.
2. Recording data over a period of seven months will enable changes in the reading development of the children to be seen.

Data and Data Sources

The kinds of data for examining the stated research problems, the sources of the data, and the procedures used to obtain the data are outlined in this section.

Audiotapes of Participant Observation

The principal data of the study were the 67 hours of audiotape recordings made during a total of 56 visits to the three homes of the four children involved in the study. These recordings were transcribed and during their making, written field notes were taken to accompany them.

Audiotape recordings were made of the children as they interacted in a variety of situations with their parents, any siblings, or with the investigator. They were audiotaped as they engaged in shared book experiences, as they engaged in reading-like behaviour, as they were interviewed by the investigator using a range of instruments to be described later in this section, and as they were reacting to environmental language in their towns. The duration of each recorded observation varied considerably. They lasted as long as the interaction that was occurring appeared relevant to the purposes of the study. The interviews with the parents were audiotape recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Field Notes

A variety of field notes were recorded throughout the observation phase of the study. These notes recorded information concerning such features of the children's experiences with books and written language as: the physical setting of the shared book experience situations; the visible reactions of the participants to any particular event during the experience; the direction and the duration of the children's attention during the experience; and the number of books read and their titles. A physical count was made of the number of children's books and story records available in each home involved in the study and the results of this were recorded. Notes were also made concerning the way in which these books were stored. Field notes were recorded of any observed writing behaviour which occurrred in the presence of the investigator and the children's behaviour while watching educational television programmes such as Sesame Street was also observed and noted on occasions. The field notes recorded throughout the study were informal, anecdotal and recorded either as the behaviour was observed or as soon as possible afterwards.

Questionnaires and Observation Guides

The questionnaires and observation guides used in this study were constructed by the investigator. The Reading Concepts Questionnaire and the Favourite Story Rereading

Observation Schedule were used during the pilot study and were modified as a result of that experience with them. The Family Reading Questionnaire however was not used during the pilot study nor was the Favourite Book Questionnaire and so were not subjected to any trialling. The Family Reading Questionnaire was the only one that was used in its entirety and in a formal interview situation. The other questionnaires and observation schedules were used incidentally at opportune times throughout the study with the children. Their use will be described later in this chapter.

Family Reading Questionnaire (Appendix A). This questionnaire was designed to be used at the commencement of the study and the questions were primarily of the free response kind. The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain information on a comprehensive range of topics such as: the educational and reading background of the parents; the developmental history of the child involved in the study; the child's range of play activities and television viewing habits; nursery school or kindergarten experience; and the availability of children's books in the home. Several sections of the questionnaire were then devoted to obtaining detailed information concerning the child's reading background with particular emphasis being placed on such areas as: the bedtime story reading of favourite stories; and the possible appearance of any reading-like behaviour. Finally, questions were included concerning the child's knowledge and awareness of environmental language, the possible appearance of any writing or writing-like behaviour and information was sought as to the parents' views of how they think that children learn to read.

Reading Concepts Questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire was designed to obtain information concerning the children's understanding and awareness of the processes involved in reading: their knowledge of some of the terminology of reading; their attitudes towards reading, being read to, and to learning to read; and their knowledge of the reading behaviour of their parents and the purposes for which they used reading. The questions were of a free response kind and additional probing questions could be asked whenever they were warranted from the nature of children's responses.

The technique of asking children who are engaged in the process of learning to read at school, what they understand about language of reading instruction and about the activity of reading itself, has been used frequently by researchers (e.g. Almy, 1967; Clay, 1966; Downing, 1969, 1970, 1971-1972; Edwards, 1958; Ehri, 1975; Johns, 1971; Reid, 1966). The results of the studies suggested that children who had not learned to read possessed little understanding of the "language of reading" or the processes involved in the activity, but as they received more and more instruction and made progress in learning to read, they gradually acquired an understanding of these verbal labels and of some of the processes involved in reading (Ehri, 1979). The questionnaire being described in this section was designed primarily to investigate the children's understanding of the process and terminology of reading.

Favourite Book Questionnaire (Appendix C). The major purpose of the questionnaire was to attempt to determine why children engage in reading-like behaviour with favourite books, what strategies they used to learn this process, and what their understanding was of what it was they were doing when they "read" a story for themselves. The questionnaire was designed to be used in a favourite story 'reading' situation and contained a schedule for observing the children's behaviour, as well as a range of free response questions to be asked before and after the 'reading'.

Favourite Story Rereading Observation Schedule (Appendix D). This schedule was designed to assist the investigator to note specific behaviours and attitudes on the part of both the parent and the child in a book experience situation involving a story that had been read several times previously. In particular, the schedule was designed to draw the investigator's attention to characteristics of the parents' reading such as: the style of the reading; the manner in which the child's participation in the reading may have been invited; and the nature of any interactions which may have occurred during the reading. The schedule also listed features to note in the child's behaviour during any repeated reading experience: the attentional and attitudinal behaviours displayed; the nature of any participation which occurred; its source of initiation, and; any physical actions such as pointing. The schedule also contained a list of points to note regarding book selection and the child's independent activity with repeatedly read stories.

Reading Concepts Observational Scale

The major purpose of this scale was to assist the investigator to obtain detailed information concerning the children's knowledge of: some of the functions of written language; the characteristics of books; the language of reading instruction, the conventions of print; and of some environmental language.

A picture story book Mother and Jennifer Go Shopping (Appendix E) was written and illustrated with colored photographs by the investigator. It contained both orthodox and unorthodox print. A set of instructions and questions for the administration of the scale were also prepared by the investigator (Appendix F). A number of the tasks incorporated into the scale were similar to those used by Clay (1972) in her test, The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties: A Diagnostic Survey.

The Reading Log

Since the investigator could not observe the children involved in the study continuously, the parents were asked to maintain a record of their children's activities involving books and any other forms of written language during each day. For this purpose, each family was provided with an 8 inch by 5 inch folder containing a supply of cards.

In this Reading Log, the parents were asked to record such information as the titles of the stories they read to the children each day and the manner in which the reading was initiated. They were also asked to note any participatory activity in which the children engaged during the reading, and to record any questions about reading or written language that the children asked. Any independent activity on the part of the children with their books or other forms of written language was also to be observed and its details recorded. The cards were collected regularly by the investigator, examined carefully, and on a subsequent visit, clarification and elaboration was obtained for whichever entries were unclear.

By asking parents to maintain these anecdotal records in diary form it was hoped that a more comprehensive and continuous source of data would be obtained. The form of recording appeared to be most suitable, since as Irwin and Bushnell (1980) suggest:

> Anecdotal records are perhaps the easiest to do of all the forms of direct observation. They require no specific time frame but can be done whenever there is something of interest to record. They need no special setting or environment but can be done anywhere. They rely on no special codes or categories or charts but can simply be written on a note pad and tucked away for later use. (p. 97)

The use of parents' records of various dimensions of their children's behaviour has long been a source of data for researchers. Goodenough (1931) for example, asked the mothers of her preschool subjects to keep records of the frequency, duration and causes of outbursts of anger. Jersild and Holmes (1935) obtained parents' records of their children's expressions of fear, while Davis (1933) asked mothers to keep records of the questions asked by young children. More comprehensive parents' records of children's development in the form of diary descriptions or "baby biographies" such as those of Pestalozzi (1774), Darwin (1877) and Shinn (1900) provided this method of collecting data for the study of children with very firm foundations. Despite criticisms by experimental psychologists such as Stern (1930) of the biased nature of the selection of the subjects, the biased nature of the observations made, the limited number of children involved and of the time taken in recording the data, the use of parents' observations for recording changes or new developments or new behaviours in their children, has found a permanent place in the study of children.

Research Methodology

> As a general premise, it is probably safe to assert that the best way to study process is to observe it directly, rather than infer its nature from known input and observed output. (Guba, 1978, p. 25)

Since this research required the investigator to study processes involved in the emergent reading behaviour of pre-school children which were developing primarily as a result of their interactions with books in their homes, it seemed logical to select participant observation with its various dimensions, as the appropriate and major data gathering methodology. Zelditch (1969) defined participant observation as a procedure in which "The field worker directly observes and also participates in the sense that he has durable social relations in S (the individuals being observed). He may or may not play an active part in events, or he may interview participants in events which may be considered part of the process of observation" (p. 9). Participant observation data collection strategies may involve the investigator in passive or active roles, with the latter dimension including the use of interview techniques.

The "Passive" Participant Observer

Schwartz and Schwartz (1969) describe the passive participant observer as one who interacts with the person or persons being observed as little as possible. They state that:

> He conceives his sole function to be observation and attempts to carry on in the same mode as an observer behind a one-way screen. Maintaining contact with the observed outside the role of observer is viewed as an interference rather than as an opportunity for gathering additional data. The investigator assumes that the more passive he is the less will he affect the situation and the greater will be his opportunity to observe events as they develop. (p. 96)

In this study, the investigator adopted a passive participant observer role whenever the children involved in the study were in book experience situations with their parents, any siblings, or when they were interacting with their books of their own accord. Audiotape recordings of the verbal interactions were recorded when they appeared to be appropriate and relevant to the study and necessary field notes were also taken. As Schwartz and Schwartz (1969, p. 96) suggest, the investigator in these situations remained as an outsider and relatively anonymous to those being observed. What was observed in these situations however, occasionally provided the basis for the investigator to take a more active participant role subsequently, in the form of questions concerning some particular action or in an attempt to replicate a particular story reading experience in order to examine and probe the observed behaviour more deeply.

The "Active" Participant Observer

According to Schwartz and Schwartz (1969) "the 'active' participant observer maximizes his participation with the observed in order to gather data and attempts to integrate his role with other roles in the social situation" (p. 97). In this study this "social situation" consisted primarily of story reading to and with the children and it was engaged in mainly for the purpose of allowing the investigator to observe and understand more completely, its role in contributing to the children's emergent reading behaviour development. An attempt was made, as Schwartz and Schwartz (1969) recommend, to strike a balance "between active participation in the lives of the subjects and observations of their behaviour which will [would] be most productive of valid data" (p. 97).

As well as reading stories to and with the children, the investigator also conducted interviews with them whenever the opportunity presented itself. During these occasions a range of questions from the various interview schedules which had been previously prepared were asked. Great care was taken however to stop asking questions as soon as any signs of frustration in the children became evident. The schedules were used flexibly, with only the questions which seemed appropriate at the time being asked. It was during these periods of active participation also, that the Reading Concepts Observational Scale (Appendices E & F) was used with the children. Once again, its administration was stopped as soon as any signs of frustration or fatigue were sensed or seen in the children.

An important component of active participant observation, was the development and maintenance of a positive relationship between the investigator and the children being observed in each family. Considerable time, effort and care was used to develop this rapport and during every visit, the opportunity was taken by the investigator to read to the children. On a number of occasions he took them presents of books. No difficulty was experienced in the establishment and maintenance of this rapport between the investigator and each of the children and it was found that they soon learned to look forward to his visits.

Although, as Wilson (1977) suggests, "the information gathered by participant observation is similar to that which can be gathered by other methods, for instance, systematic observation and structured interviewing" (p. 256), the participant observer does have additional advantages. He is not for example, limited to gathering data in specific places and times and can conduct his interviews and observations in a variety of situations, as the opportunity arises. Most importantly, Wilson points out, he is in a good position to monitor the rapport he has built up with his subjects and can link together information he gathers by various means, in a manner that is nearly impossible with other approaches.

The use of the observation-interview methodology within the framework of participant observation has been subject to some criticism. The excessive time involved in collecting data in this way, and the claims that the resulting data are difficult to analyze and interpret are problems with which the researchers, using the method are usually able to deal. Criticisms that the data obtained in this manner lacks validity, reliability and objectivity, are however more serious in nature, but as Erlwanger (1974, p. 314) points out, the validity of these criticisms may well depend on the purpose of the interviews. Where the interview is aimed at assessing the knowledge of subject matter individuals have acquired in order to arrive at conclusions and generalizations concerning the appropriateness of some method of instruction, then the criticism may have some validity. But as Erlwanger claims, where the interviewer is seeking to examine and understand phenomena underlying an individual's behaviour and the interview is seen as a means of gaining access to the individual's ideas, then the criticisms of observation based interviews would appear to be less valid. Erlwanger's views concerning this problem are particularly relevant for the use made of interviews during the study.

During the passive participant observation sessions certain behaviours and responses were noted for subsequent examination through questioning. Sometimes these questions were directed at the parents, but mostly they involved the children. Care was taken by the investigator to avoid detailed probing which may have indicated to the child being interviewed, the type of response that was expected. An effort was made also to use leading or suggestive questions as little as possible, although, as Piaget (1960) observes, this mode of questioning does have a place in this type of study: "Naturally, these last questions, which are suggestive, must be kept to the end, that is to say till the moment when the child cannot be made to say anything of itself" (p. 3).

The age of the children involved in the study made it necessary for the investigator to be careful to ask questions of them that were directly related to something they had recently experienced, and to draw their attention to the particular experience within the framework of the question. It became evident, very early in the study, that the children would lose interest in continuing a discussion if they could not answer the questions quickly and easily on the basis of their past experience.

As the study progressed and the investigator engaged in increasing amounts of active participation, it was found that through increased identification with the children, he was better able, as Schwartz and Schwartz (1969) determined as a result of their participative observation studies, "to become aware of the subtleties of communication and interaction" (p. 98). The investigator became more sensitive to the timing, the type and range of questions to ask in order to obtain insights into the children's thinking. In this way, the investigator seemed to be operating in accordance within an important ethnographic methodological principle stated by Wilson (1977):

> The qualitative research enterprise depends on on the ability of the researcher to make himself a sensitive research instrument by transcending his own perspective and becoming acquainted with the perspectives of those he is studying. (p. 261)

Participant observation, especially of the active kind, seemed to be the most suitable research methodology to use for this particular study.

Validity of the Research Data

In planning the gathering of data for this study, a number of problems related to the issue of validity had to be considered. One of these has already been discussed in the description of the research methodology, but others became apparent as the different aspects of the implementation of the study were examined.

This study was directed at investigating the reading development of preschool children in the natural setting of the home. One of the aspects of this development which was of particular interest to the investigator, was the possible appearance of reading-like behaviour in the children as a result of being read to by their parents. In order that this behaviour would be allowed to develop naturally in the children without deliberate efforts being made by the parents to cause or attempt to force its appearance, they were not told of the investigator's particular interest in this behaviour. Nor were they informed directly of any of the other specific areas of interest of the investigator as far as the study was concerned. They may have learned of at least some of the specific areas of interest of the investigator from the participating in the administration of the Family Reading Questionnaire and from the instructions for their use of their Reading Log. The investigator however, did not note any significant changes in their story reading behaviours as the study progressed except in the case of one mother, who altered her policy concerning the selecting of books for nightly story reading she shared with children. At the conclusion of the data collecting process they were each asked if they thought that the investigator's presence during these occasions had caused them to alter the way in which they read to their children during the course of the study. Each of them expressed the opinion that no change had occurred because of this. Every effort was made therefore, to have the parents, and of course the children, remain unaware of the specific purposes of the study.

The obtrusive effects on the children and their parents of an audiotape recorder during observations and interviews presented another source of error which may invalidate the data being gathered. Strauss (1969) points out that "the use of such mechanical means often makes subjects uncomfortable, resulting in stilted or unnatural behaviour" (p. 73). The age of the children involved in this study however, allowed them to be quite unselfconscious in the presence of the tape recorder, and apart from demonstrating an interest in hearing their own voices played back to them, no change in their behaviour was noted when the machine was in use. The parents also, appeared unaffected by the use of the tape recorder, even in the early stages of the study when the results of extensive interviews conducted with them were recorded. Since all but one of them had made use of tape recorders in their work from time to time, it is assumed that this familiarization had contributed to their acceptance of the equipment. Its constant and frequent use during every visit that was made to their homes contributed to the natural acceptance of the use of the machine.

Throughout the study, numerous interviews were conducted with both the parents and their children. While many of these were informal in nature in the sense that no prepared interview schedule was followed, a number of them did involve the use of previously prepared questions. These interview schedules however, were always used quite flexibly and the range and type of questions were extended on an impromptu basis, when probing seemed necessary and additional relevant information appeared to be available.

The problems of the authenticity of data obtained through interviews are many and varied. McCall (1969) for example, notes that "contaminating effects (interview data) are not located exclusively in the researcher, but may also be manifest in the interviewee" (p. 129). He sees potential reasons for interviewees to slant or somewhat distort their accounts as resting in such factors as: ulterior motives (e.g. to convey a favourable impression); bars to spontaneity in the interview situation (e.g. the presence of someone other than the investigator in the interview situation); idiosyncratic factors (e.g. the mood or emotional state of the interviewee); and reportorial abilities (e.g. the level of verbal skill of the interviewee).

In order to reduce the possible contaminating effects on the data obtained, a number of strategies were used by the investigator. For example, parents were never interviewed in the presence of their children, although the father and mother, were on occasions interviewed together. This latter procedure appeared to add to the authenticity of the data obtained since it seemed to have the effect of "keeping them honest" in their retrospective comments on their children's development. It was noted for example, that on occasions one parent would correct the other's comment or would sometimes seek confirmation of a description of some relevant experience or behaviour from the partner. The children, similarly were never interviewed in the presence of their parent, nor the presence of any sibling. Spontaneity therefore did not appear to present itself as a problem with either the parents or the children. The effects of any ulterior motives the parents may have had in attempting to impress the investigator with regard to their own reading experiences with their children may also have been reduced by interviewing them together.

Since all the parents had very well developed verbal skills no problems were experienced with their reportorial skills nor did any idiosyncratic factors seem to present any difficulties during interviews conducted with them. Although for their ages, the children each had well developed verbal skills, they all experienced some difficulty at times in responding adequately to questions which required them to introspect concerning some specific behaviour with regard to reading. The investigator had to be particularly sensitive to their mood and emotional state when interviewing them either formally or informally in order to not only maintain the rapport that he had established with them, but also to try and ensure that they did not become frustrated with the questioning, and so endanger the integrity of their answers. Since much of the questioning of the children was conducted in an incidental manner during active participant observation sessions with the investigator while he was interacting with them in the company of their books, it was not a difficult matter to exercise control over this factor. Some of the more important questions were asked on a number of occasions in different situations. In this way, the consistency of the children's responses was able to be checked and where possible inconsistencies appeared, further questioning was instigated.

As well as taking account of the possible sources of invalidating the data from the interviewees' perspective, the investigator had to be constantly alert to possible deleterious effects on its authenticity from factors present within himself. McCall (1969) lists three possible sources of the influence on the data from the participant observer: "the structural features of the observer's role-relations with subjects; the personal characteristics of the observer, particularly his psychological functioning; and characteristics of the observer's intellectual frame of reference" (p. 128).

Since the investigator possessed a similar educational background to the parents and as he was constantly exhibiting an interest in the development of their children, no difficulty was experienced in the area of role-relations. Nor did his personal characteristics seem to cause any reactive negative effects on the behavior or responses of any of the parents. As evidence of this, the investigator has maintained a continuous friendly association with all the participants in the study, since the data collecting concluded.

Due to the fact that all the children enjoyed being read to and the investigator was seen as someone who liked reading to them, his role-relations and personal characteristics did not seem to be factors that would cause any loss of authenticity in the data with respect to the children. It was not long before the investigator was seen by the children as "a friend of the family who liked to read to them." The only effect that seemed to result from this "over-rapport" was that the children were probably read to more frequently during the period of the study, than they would have been had the investigator not been visiting their homes regularly. The style which the investigator used to read to the children was also different, in certain respects, from that of the parents, and may have had some influence on their reading development. Since the prime focus of the study was on the development of the reading behaviour in the children and was not on the reading styles of the parents, this did not seem to be a serious source of any loss of validity of the resulting data.

It was in his reading-to-the-children behaviour, that the investigator's intellectual frame of reference, or bias, however, may have had its greatest effect on the data that was gathered. Since the parents were present on occasions when he was reading to their children, it is possible that some of them at least, might have begun to incorporate some of the features of the style used by the investigator in his reading, into their own styles of reading. The investigator considered attempting to emulate the reading styles of the parents, but when it was found that in all the families involved in the study, the mother's and father's reading styles were quite different, one from the other, it was decided to use his normal style of reading. As previously indicated, the parents all stated that they thought the presence of the investigator in their homes did not affect their reading behaviour, and it was extremely difficult to determine if any change that may have occurred was the result of their modelling the investigator's reading style, or was simply an outcome of normal change. At all times the investigator refrained from giving any of them any suggestions as to how to read to their children.

A further problem with regard to the investigator's intellectual frame of reference or bias which McCall (1969) recognized as having a possible effect on the authenticity of the data was that this may "adversely condition his perceptions by leading him to pay selective attention to certain aspects of the phenomenon rather than to others" (p. 129). The effects of this were attempted to be overcome by the tape recording as much as possible of the verbal interaction which occurred in either his passive or active participant observer roles and by having the parent record their observations in their Reading Log of their children's interactions with any written language. In selecting data from the resulting transcriptions the investigator remained constantly alert to any possible effect of his biases in his selections of data to use in relation to a particular question.

Considerable effort then, was made by the investigator to reduce or eliminate potential invalidating factors from influencing the data that were obtained during the study. As well as taking steps to control the factors that could interfere with internal validity or "internal adequacy," as Guba (1978, p. 65) prefers to call it, the fact that the investigator made persistent and repeated observations over a lengthy period of time also contributed to this aspect of the study. As Guba (1978) concludes:

> Thus, internal adequacy (validity) is, to some extent, a function of the amount of time and effort which the naturalistic inquirer invests in repeated and continuous observation. Not only will the investigator be able to differentiate typical from atypical situations or identify the enduring or pervasive qualities which characterize a situation, but he will also know when to give evidence to the occasional aberrant or apparently idiosyncratic observation which nevertheless carries great insight and meaning. (p. 65)

While the majority of problems related to the validity of the data have been related to internal validity, the problem of external validity or external adequacy (Guba, 1978, pp. 67-70), must also be considered in a study of this nature. Guba described the problem in the following way:

> Whether or not certain information is generalizable is a function of the degree to which the situation being investigated is a representative "slice of life," as well as a function of the isomorphism

> between the situation in which it was generated and the situation to which it is to be generalized. (p. 68)

Although in the area of external adequacy as Guba points out, the ethnographer is free from the major problems which constantly plagues the experimentalist, that of "the lack of isomorphism between laboratory and real world" (p. 68), the unrepresentative nature of the sample used in this study, was the most difficult external validity question to be faced. Since, as McCall and Simmons (1969) suggests, "participant observers can seldom prescribe [their emphasis] the samples in advance but can only describe [their emphasis] and justify them after the fact" (p. 64), this is the approach that has to be used here.

No attempt was made to select a sample for the purpose of this study, which could be labelled as being representative of the wider population. The children were chosen because they became available, because they were of suitable age and because they were being read to on a regular basis, by their parents. However, the fact that all the children came from what could be classified as upper middle class homes and were born of parents, all of whom could be described as being well-educated, made them an unrepresentative sample, and so restricts the generalizability of any results which might be obtained from the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data.

In any discussion concerning the matter of external validity, it is helpful to distinguish between what has been described as a statistical generalization and a theoretical generalization (Jahoda, Deutsch and Cook, 1952). For example, if this study had been concerned with determining how many parents read to their children, then a large, representative sample would have been needed in order to be able to make a statistical generalization. The study in general, however, were aimed at examining what, how and why children were learning about books and reading when parents, children and books came together and interacted, and theoretical generalizations were seen as its major outcome. As Hoffman and Lippitt (1960) suggest:

> Representative samples are needed for statistical generalizations and to supplement and test the limitations of the theoretical generalizations, but smaller and less adequate samples can be used to test and generate theories and to study ongoing processes. (p. 1004)

Representativeness then, may not always be the primary issue in the study of a problem, especially if that problem concerns the development of a process.

Irwin and Bushnell (1980) point out, that "Much of the knowledge we have gathered about human behaviour and development has come through observation" (p. 22). It was Darwin in his The Origin of Species these authors report, who "suggested that by observing the development of the infant, one could catch a glimpse of the development of the species itself" (p. 24). Darwin (1877) himself through the recorded observations of the development of his own son gave the "baby biography" of Pestalozzi (1774) scientific legitimacy and since that time, observing small unrepresentative samples of children, has become an acceptable means of generating and also confirming various theories of how children learn. Much of Piaget's (1962) theory building concerning the cognitive development of children, for example, resulted from the observations and interactions with his own children. Similarly much of the research of linguists such as Brown (1973) and Bloom (1970) has been conducted with small unrepresentative samples of children who came from well-educated parents.

The use of small, unrepresentative samples of children in conducting longitudinal studies in naturalistic settings for the purpose of generating various theories of how they learn has a long and respected tradition. The generalizability of the results of many of these studies appears to have been based on the premise that, although children who have not been classified as atypical might learn at different rates, what they learn, how they learn, and why they learn will follow similar principles, provided the conditions that are provided for that learning are similar. As Langer (1960) suggests: "The direction of the child's development is, then, immanent in his functional structures, the environment merely provides the appropriate and necessary scene" (p. 161).

The external validity of the outcomes of this study then, rest on the naturalness of the setting in which the data was collected, on the fact that although the children came from advantaged homes they could still be considered as being normal in their development rather than atypical, and on the point that theoretical rather than statistical generalizations were arrived at as a result of examining the data.

Phases in the Study

The study proceeded through three phases. The first phase consisted of a brief pilot study during which the investigator carried out two participant observation visits to the home of one of the children who was subsequently to become part of the final study. The second phase occurred when the investigator, for the first time, visited the homes of these children whose parents had agreed to allow to become part of the study. The third phase was the period of participant observation during which the data for the study was collected.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study, consisting of two visits to the home of Gillian when she was 4 years of age, was conducted during December 1976. Both parents were observed reading to and with Gillian and her brother during these visits. Audiotape recordings were made of these interactions and field notes were also recorded. A similar procedure was carried out with Gillian and the investigator, who also made use of the Reading Concepts Questionnaire for trialling purposes. The pilot study was undertaken for six major purposes:

1. The research was based on the assumption that the shared book experiences in the form of bedtime stories in the home play an important role in the reading development of preschool children. The primary function of the pilot study was to verify if this assumption could be justified.
2. The projected research design comprised both passive and active participant observations of book experience situations which would incorporate the use of audiotape recording and the hand recording of data. The practicability of these design features had to be checked.
3. The use of audiotape recording equipment in the home necessitated some field experimentation and testing in order to gain the best possible recordings.
4. The investigator needed to obtain experience in using the bedtime story reading situation for the purpose of obtaining experience in questioning children about their knowledge of books and reading in such a way that it would seem a natural part of the activity to them.
5. The range, type, and sequence of questions which comprised the Reading Concepts Questionnaire needed

to be trialled for their suitability for preschool children and experience needed to be gained by the investigator in asking additional, probing questions while administering the questionnaire.

6. The items which comprised the Favourite Book Rereading Observational Schedule situation had to be checked as to their relevance, comprehensiveness and usefulness.

Results of the Pilot Study. Subsequent transcription, analysis and interpretation of the audiotape recordings and accompanying field notes of the parent/child and investigator/child book experience interactions justified the assumption upon which the study was based: the bedtime story situation does contribute to the reading development of a preschool child. Reading-like behaviour was already evident in Gillian's participatory activities with her books. She also exhibited considerable book handling knowledge and skills and her attitude towards books and reading was positive and confident.

The research design and procedures were found to be suitable and workable. The passive and active participant observation roles of the investigator were found to be entirely appropriate although the problem of interacting with Gillian on her own proved to be a difficult situation to arrange. Her brother kept wanting to participate in any reading that the investigator did with her and tended to dominate any interaction that took place and excluded Gillian from virtually participating in the reading and questioning. The experience made it very clear to the investigator that interaction sessions of this nature had to be conducted under conditions which would be free from interruptions.

It did not prove to be difficult to obtain good quality audiotape recordings, although care had to be taken to place the microphone within three to six feet of the child, because of the lack of resonance in her voice. Adequate recordings could be made however, from any position in the room. The presence of the tape recorder did not appear to adversely effect the shared reading experiences or the interaction which took place.

The investigator obtained valuable experience in using his questioning strategies during the story reading situation in order to probe the child's knowledge of books and reading. He found that, provided the questions were asked in an incidental and casual way and were directly related to something that was occurring, then responses were usually obtained readily. Any attempt to prolong the questioning quickly resulted in a request to continue reading the story.

As a result of using the Reading Concepts Questionnaire, it was found necessary to make several important changes to the sequence, type and range of questions. It was determined that the sequences moved too abruptly from one topic to the next and that the range of questions on each topic had to be extended. Too many of the questions required the child to introspect concerning certain aspects of books and reading, and this caused frustration to appear very quickly. The investigator was able to gain valuable experience in learning how to ask probing questions from the basis of the child's responses, although it was found that this technique required a great deal of skill, something which the investigator had not yet developed adequately.

The use that was made of the Favourite Book Rereading Observation Schedule also proved to be valuable. It was found that a considerable number of items needed to be added and that there were significant differences in the manner in which each parent reread a favourite story.

Perhaps the most useful outcome of the result of conducting a pilot study was the realization that no difficulty would be experienced in obtaining data from both passive and active participant observation sessions of shared book experiences. Gillian would willingly listen to and interact with stories being read to her for long periods of time without any apparent loss of interest. The involvement which occurred with each story being read caused both the parents and her to disregard the presence of the investigator and his tape recorder and note pad. The naturalistic setting required for the study did not appear to be difficult to maintain even when the investigator was interacting with her.

Implementing the Study

After an initial telephone contact had been made with the parents who had been identified as having children who were considered suitable for inclusion in the study and a tentative agreement was reached for the families to participate in the study, a visit was made to each home to meet both the parents and the children and to outline the purpose of the study and its major design features. Since Gillian's home was a considerable distance from the investigator's, requiring weekend visits to be made, this initial visit was incorporated with the first data collection one.

The timing of the visit was arranged so that the investigator could meet the children, observe them being read their usual bedtime story or stories, read to them himself if possible in order to make the initial contact a positive experience, and to then discuss the features and purpose of the study with the parents, after the children had gone to bed. This procedure was followed in all but Jennifer's case where it was found that she was too shy during this initial visit to permit the investigator to read to her.

In the discussion with the parents the main purpose of the study was given, the design features were outlined, the duration of the study was discussed and their role in its implementation was described. It was explained that, for many years educators had realised that children who had been read to frequently in the home before they came to school, seemed to experience little difficulty in learning to read once they went to school. The purpose of the study was given as an attempt to observe their children in book experience situations in the home, particularly the bedtime story situation, to see what role, if any, these experiences played in the reading development of their children. It was made very clear that the aim was to observe them reading to their children as they would normally do and that it was essential for the purposes of the study that they maintained their usual procedure while the investigator was present. It was pointed out that the observed sessions would have to be audiotaped and that some written records would also be made.

The need for the investigator to read to the children on a reasonably regular basis was explained to the parents and the fact that there would be occasions when he would wish to "interview" each of the children involved in the study on their own, free from interruption was also pointed out. Since this would require some visits to be made during the day, the timing and feasability of this was discussed. Suitable times for the evening visits were arranged and reference to the duration of the study was made.

The purpose and the possibility of the parents maintaining a Reading Log on a daily basis as a record of their children's experiences with books and written language were discussed. Finally, the need for them to be interviewed collectively concerning the family reading habits and the developmental history of their children who were to be involved in the study was outlined. Some examples of the kinds of information that was wanted were given. Throughout the discussions, the investigator answered any questions asked by the parents.

As a result of these visits all the parents interviewed agreed to participate in the study. A date and time was agreed on for the first visit and the investigator left feeling that the reaction of the parents had been positive, that they were interested in the proposed study and that they would readily cooperate in its implementation.

Data Collection Phase

The process data were collected by the researcher over a seven month period, commencing in October/November, 1977 and concluding in April/May, 1978.

The four children were seen for different amounts of time, and with differing degrees of regularity. Gillian, who lived a distance of 200 miles from the investigator's place of residence, was seen every five weeks on the average, when the investigator visited the home and stayed with the family from the Friday afternoon or evening, until Sunday midday approximately. On one occasion, the visit lasted for three days. During the eight visits that were made, a total of 27 hours of audiotape recorded observations were made. The period of time spent in her home, was of course, considerably longer than that.

Kaaren and Sean on the other hand, lived within fifty yards of the investigator's residence and were visited on 29 occasions for periods usually ranging between one and two hours. These visits were mostly made on a weekly basis in the evenings, before the children were due to go to bed, but on some occasions, they were visited during the afternoon. A total of 24 hours of audiotape recorded observations was made.

Jennifer's home was approximately one mile from the investigator's residence, and although it had been planned to visit the home on a weekly basis, for the duration of the study, family illnesses reduced the number of visits. A total of 19 visits were made ranging in length from 30 minutes to approximately two hours. During these visits, which were made either in the evening before Jennifer's bedtime, or in the afternoon, a total of 16 hours of audiotape recorded observations were made.

The pattern that was usually followed during the evening visits to the homes of Kaaren and Sean and Jennifer was for the investigator to observe one of the parents reading to the children. In the case of Kaaren and Sean, they were almost invariably read to together. With Jennifer, however, sometimes her brother Christopher was present and sometimes he either chose not to join in the reading or had gone to bed. After the parents had finished their bedtime story reading, the investigator would read to the children also. Usually the parents were not present at this time. After the reading was finished the investigator would often sit with one or both of the parents and discuss anything which had occurred during the intervening period since the previous visit, which may have been relevant to the study. As the study progressed, the investigator arranged for some daytime visits. During these occasions he frequently was able to conduct interviews with each of the children individually, as well as read to them.

In the case of Gillian, the procedure was somewhat different, since the investigator went and lived with the family for a period of usually two or three days. Here he was much more in the role of the true participant observer, moving from a passive to an active role, as the situation demanded. Whenever either of the parents were reading to the children (Gillian was almost invariably read to in the company of her brother), the investigator adopted a passive participant observer role, but there were many occasions during the visits he was engaged actively with either Gillian on her own or with her and her brother. When he wished to interview her or read to and with her without interruption, the father's study in the basement of the house was used. On one occasion he was able to spend half a day in Gillian's kindergarten with her, observing and discussing with her teacher the kinds of literacy activitiss that she usually engaged in there.

The research procedures involved audiotape recording coupled with recorded hand written field notes, interviewing, and observations made by parents and entered in their Reading Log. These procedures are detailed in the following sections.

Audiotape Recordings of Interactions. In an ethnographic-type study, as Wilson (1977) suggests, "The researcher develops sampling procedures that reflect the research goals ... [he] makes calculated decisions about what kind of data to collect and whether or not he should engage in active field interviewing (probing, rather than relying on naturalistic observation)" (p. 256). Because the frequency, duration and time of the day of the visits varied from family to family, and because each family was different in its composition, routine and in the manner in which the shared book experiences were conducted, the approach to observing and recording had to be extremely flexible. The only prearranged observation which occurred was when one of the parents read to their children. Initially most of the interactions which occurred in book experience situations between either the parents and the children or the investigator and the children were recorded. As the study progressed however, the investigator was able to become much more selective in his audiotape recording. Where a parent was simply reading a story with little or no participation occurring on the part of the children, hand recorded notes only were taken. Also, where the same story had been read on many previous occasions and audiotape recordings had been made of several of these, once again hand recorded notes only were taken.

All the audiotape recordings were made using a portable Sony Cassette-Recorder CF 320, which could be operated from either batteries or AC electric power. It contained a built-in Electret Condenser Microphone, which made recording a relatively simple matter.

The tape recorder was usually placed approximately from three to six feet in front of the parent and the children, close to where the investigator was sitting, so that he could operate it easily. From this position he had a clear view of the children's faces. Any significant movements or change in expression which occurred during the interaction were recorded by hand in a notebook. The biographical details of the book being used were also recorded along with some indication of how frequently it had been read before.

Whenever the investigator was interacting with any of the children in book experience situations, either reading to and with them or questioning them, the process was audiotape recorded, but with the microphone as close to the children as possible. Hand written notes of any observations made during these sessions were recorded after the interactions had concluded.

Audiotape recordings were made also of the responses and interactions which occurred when three of the children were driven around the streets of their towns and were encouraged to identify the environmental language of the streets. A similar procedure was followed when one of the children was taken to the toy department of a large department store and when she went to the library to select a new supply of books.

Interviews. Interviews were conducted with the parents and the children. The parents were all interviewed at the commencement of the study with the investigator using the Family Reading Questionnaire. In all three families both parents were present for the duration of this interview and both took a share in responding. From time to time throughout the study they were questioned about entries that they had made in their Reading Logs which seemed to require elaboration or explanation. All of these interviews were audiotape recorded. A great number of incidental conversations were held with the parents. These were not recorded although written notes were sometimes taken of any relevant comments made during these conversations. An interview was conducted also with one family's live-in baby sitter.

Interviews with the children were conducted more frequently as the study progressed and rapport was more fully established with them. No formal schedule was adhered to and these interviews occurred when the opportune time presented itself and the investigator found that he could interact with one of the children individually. The Reading Concepts Observational Scale, the Reading Concepts Questionnaire and the Favourite Book Questionnaire were used during these sessions but apart from the scale, none of them were ever used in their entirety. Questions were selected from them and were usually interspersed throughout the reading of a story as an opportunity presented itself. On occasions however, especially with the older children, quite lengthy questioning sessions were able to be conducted.

There were times when sequence of questions would be prompted by some response one of the children might have made to a reading experience. Using a questioning strategy similar to that used by Piaget (1960) in his clinical method, the investigator would probe the child's understanding of the particular experience.

All the interviews with the children and with the parents were audiotape recorded as well as one that was conducted with Kaaren's and Sean's live-in baby sitter.

Indirect Observations. Indirect observation data were obtained through the parents recording in their Reading Log any observations made according to a list of suggestions given to them. The cards from the Reading Log were collected on a regular basis. They were examined carefully by the investigator between the time that they were collected and the next visit, points were noted for clarification and elaboration and these were discussed with the parent who made the particular entry, during the next visit. These discussions were audiotape recorded.

Data Analysis and Reporting the Results

In this study, two main sets of data were gathered: (1) family background and home reading environment data; and (2) children's reading behaviour data. As a result of repeated examinations of the transcripts of the audiotape recordings for the purposes of analyzing the data and reporting the results, children's reading behaviour data were divided into two main categories; concepts about books, print and reading data and reading-like behaviour data. Each of these categories of data were divided into a number of subcategories, some of which were determined before the study commenced, but most of them were developed inductively as the processing of the data proceeded. This section of this chapter outlines the methods that were used for inductively developing the category systems, explains the way in which the data were analyzed, and described how the results of the study were reported.

All the categories of data were used to construct a qualitative analysis through which the results were both reported and interpreted in accordance with a theory that was emerging from the data on the reading development of preschool children.

Analysis of Family Background and Home Reading Environment

The main sources of the data related to the family background and home reading environment came from the transcripts of the audiotape recorded interviews conducted with the parents of the children involved in the study. An examination of the transcripts revealed that although some changes were needed to the original range of categories used to obtain the data, to a great extent, their order and range as they appeared in the questionnaire would be suitable to both analyze and report the data. These categories were decided on by the investigator after a survey of the literature reporting the results of studies on early reading development and from an examination of the questionnaires used by Durkin (1966) in her study of early readers.

The investigator examined all the transcripts and noted patterns of comments made by the parents which seemed to be related contextually to the categories already determined. The most relevant statements made concerning each child under each category were then selected and organized for inclusion in that particular section. The relative importance of each category and its relationship to the reading development of children was then commented on and the selected statements of the parents for each child were incorporated into the section to provide examples of this importance and relationship. The data were then interpreted usually in conjunction with references from the relevant literature and a summary of what appeared to be the main features of each category was then composed.

Children's Reading Behaviour

The category system used for analyzing children's reading behaviour data during their interactions with various forms of print in different settings, was developed by inductive means. An examination by the investigator of the audiotape recorded transcriptions made of the interactions, made of the field notes taken by the investigator, and made of the observations recorded by the parents, led to the building of the category system. The procedure that was used here, and the complete analysis of the data, followed, in most respects, that described by Glaser (1969) in an article entitled The Constant Comparative Method of Analysis.

The constant comparative method of analysis of qualitative data, is designed to aid the skills and sensitivities required in the inspection of this type of data in "generating a theory which is integrated, consistent, plausible, close to the data, and in a form which is clear enough to be readily, if only partially, operationalized for testing a quantitative research" (Glaser, 1969, p. 218). It is concerned with, Glaser goes on to suggest, "generating and plausibly suggesting (not provisionally testing) many properties and hypotheses about a general [his emphasis] phenomena" (p. 219) and may be applied "to any kind of qualitative information, including observations, interviews, documents, articles, books and so forth" (p. 220).

In this study, the "general phenomena" being investigated was the reading development of preschool children. The qualitative information used were the results of observations and interviews and in reporting and the interpreting the results, constant reference was made to the relevant literature.

Rather than follow the typical quantitatively oriented research report approach of analyzing the data in one section and in a subsequent section, interpreting and discussing it, in this study, these procedures have been combined. The richness, variety, and extent of the data from ethnographic studies of this type makes it necessary for this process to be followed or much of the data loses their significance and relevance unless it is commented on at the time of the reporting. This procedure was followed by Brown (1973) and Bloom (1970) in reporting the results of their observational studies of the oral language development of young children.

It was also the method employed by Bissex (1979) in her longitudinal case study report of the written language development of her own son.

The constant comparative method consists of four main stages and Glaser (1969) described these as: "(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory" (p. 220). As the analysis proceeds, each stage gradually transforms itself into the next, although as Glaser points out, "previous stages remain in operation throughout the analysis and provide continuous development to the following stage until the analysis is terminated" (p. 220).

The inductive development of the category systems used in this study started with repeated examinations of the transcripts containing the data. From the initial examinations two broad categories of data became apparent: data which seemed to reflect the children's developing concepts about books, print and reading, and data which were related to reading-like behaviour. The nature of the data however indicated that these two categories overalapped considerably and that they could never be seen as being mutually exclusive. As the relevant incidents were coded into one or both of these broad categories, subcategories for each of them began to emerge as the data began "to speak for themselves."

Labels began to be generated for each of these through the characteristics of the incidents. The construction of the subcategories for concepts about books, print and reading data arose mostly from the kinds of information that was sought through the use of the Reading Concepts Observation Scale and the Reading Concepts Questionnaire. The subcategories for reading-like behaviour data were developed much more inductively as the transcripts were continuously examined. The initial categorization scheme was seen as tentative, and flexible and open to change, if as a result of further coding, a more appropriate system emerged.

The investigator then proceeded to follow Glaser's (1969) procedure and began coding each relevant incident in as many of the subcategories as possible. As this was done each incident was compared with the previous incidents in the same subcategory. This process soon clarified the theoretical properties of each subcategory and not only made the decision concerning where each incident could be used most profitably a great deal simpler, but it also gave a clear understanding of the interrelated nature of the data.

As the process of coding continued the constant comparative units changed, as Glaser (1969) suggested "from [his emphasis] comparison of incident with incident to [his emphasis] incident with properties of the category (or subcategory) which resulted from initial comparison of incidents" (p. 222). This had the effect of causing the more diverse properties of each subcategory to become integrated which in turn enabled the investigator to reduce his range of subcategories and to relate what he was finding to similar incidents found in the literature. As this happened, rather than being overwhelmed by the amount of data, the investigator was able as Glaser (1969) suggests, to "delimit his theory" (p. 222) as the larger chunks of data became more meaningfully related to each other.

Throughout this whole process, careful attention was given to the selection of incidents from the data obtained from each of the four children involved in the study. Since the children were of different ages, this had the effect of providing a developmental framework for the final stage of using the data in each subcategory and category to report and to interpret the results of the study according to the theory that was being generated by the data.

Reliability

The problem of reliability also had to be dealt with in this study. This issue is one that is frequently raised by the critics of observational studies carried out in natural settings. As Willems (Willems and Raush , 1969) observes:

> Naturalistic research is often criticized on the grounds that it is not replicable, and it often seems to be assumed that behaviour represents a class of such unstable and complicated phenomena, that unless it is constrained by experi-

> mental controls, it is not amenable to scientific study. (p. 57)

These "experimental controls" usually require the investigator to obtain some acceptable reliability coefficient for intercoder and/or intracoder coding of the analysis of the data based on the categorization system being used. This procedure was not followed in this study.

The system of categories which was finally arrived at for analyzing the data for this study was achieved through the process of constant comparison. The determination of this system and the coding that was carried out to arrive at the various categories and subcategories were all an intrinsic part of the process of reporting the results. The time factor involved was extensive and to have had some other person replicate the procedure could not be considered. Apart from the demands of time however, it would seem that replicability in this type of qualitative analsysis may not be essential. As Glaser (1969) points out:

> Depending as it still does on the skills and sensitivities of the analyst, the constant comparative method is not [his emphasis] designed (as methods of quantitative analysis are) to guarantee that two analysts working independently with the same data will achieve the same results; it is [his emphasis] designed to allow, with discipline, for some of the vagueness and flexibility which aid the creative generation of theory. (p. 219)

The most important source of reliability for the analysis of the data was achieved through what Guba (1978) calls an "overlap of methods" (p. 71). He states that "in the interest of demonstrating replicability [reliability], the naturalistic evaluator should forage for information by using several methods simultaneously wherever possible" (p. 72).

Much of the data for this study were collected by different methods. For example reading-like behaviour data were obtained from observations of parent-child, investigator-child and even sibling-child interactions. On occasions it was obtained when a child was interacting with a book on his or her own. Data concerning the development of reading-like behaviour were obtained from parents' retrospective comments in interview situations, from their direct observations recorded in their Reading Log, from the introspective comments made by the children themselves in answer to questions posed by the investigator, and from the passive and active participant observations made by the investigator of its development in shared book situations. Many of the questions asked of the children were asked in a variety of settings and in different ways and this also contributed to the reliability of the subsequent analysis when similar responses were seen to be obtained despite these variations in the asking of the questions.

A second means of obtaining an indication of the reliability of the results of the analysis of the data was through what Guba (1978) refers to as an "audit" (p. 71). Although it is probably too much to expect that two independent judges working from the same basic data would arrive at the same system of categories for (or from) the analysis, Guba claims that:

> ... a second judge should be able to verify that: (a) the categories devised by a first judge make sense in view of the data from which he worked, and (b) the data have been appropriately arranged into a category system. The second judge audits the work of the first much like an examiner audits the work of an accountant. (p. 71)

For this study, the investigator submitted the categorization system and the accompanying data to a professor of reading education at a neighboring university for "audit" purposes. Agreement was obtained that the system made sense and was appropriately arranged for the data.

Limitations and Delimitations

The major limitations and delimitations of the study were:

1. The size of the sample was small and cannot be described as representative.
2. The sample was restricted to those children who has been and were being read to with some regularity.
3. The age range of the sample did not include children below three years of age.
4. The period of observation was relatively short.
5. The problem of asking preschool children introspective, reflective and reasoning type questions

and receiving reliable and usable answers was one that was difficult to overcome.

6. Although the study was carried out in the naturalistic settings and the investigator became to a large extent a fully accepted participant observer, certain obtrusive effects resulting from his presence and the use of the tape recorder probably distorted the observed behaviours to some extent.
7. The information obtained from the parents during the administration of The Family Reading Questionnaire may have been subject to some distortion due to the retrospective nature of many of the questions.

Summary

This study was designed to examine the reading development of preschool children as it occurred within the naturalistic settings of their homes. A total of 56 visits were made to three homes involving four children. During these visits which were made over a seven month period, a total of 67 hours of audiotaped observations were recorded along with a comprehensive range of field notes. The children were observed interacting in a variety of book and other written language situations, parents and children were interviewed, and the parents also recorded their own observations of their children.

The research design was intended to yield data which would provide insights into how young children might engage in the process of learning to read through their own self-directed strategies. These insights may well contribute to our understanding of the conditions which would allow this to take place.

The analysis of data and reporting the results of the study were conducted qualitatively. The categorization and coding system which was used to bring coherence to a wide range of data, was in some cases, predetermined, but with respect to much of children's reading behaviour data, the system was generated by the process of constant comparison. The data, were able through this procedure, to provide the framework for the analysis, and, rather than encouraging its compartmentalization, the process of constant comparison caused the different categories and their properties to become more integrated. The intrinsic coherence of the data was therefore not lost as incidents reported under one category or subcategory could be seen to be related to other categories or subcategories. The information base which the data provided was examined for the presence of any relationships among the children's shared book experiences in their homes, their growing understanding of books, print and reading, the appearances of any reading-like behaviour in book experience situations and their attitudes towards books, print and reading. The finding of any suggested relationship was considered to contribute toward an explanation of the appearance of emergent reading behaviour in preschool children.

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND THE READING ENVIRONMENT OF THE HOME

Introduction

A study of the development of preschool children's emergent reading behaviour which aims to be in any way comprehensive, has of necessity, to include a careful and detailed examination of their home background. In particular, that examination should focus on the reading environment of the home. It should focus on such factors as the personal reading habits, experiences and attitudes of the parents, on the availability and range of children's books in the home and on their sources of supply. It should focus on the duration and frequency of reading to the children and the manner and climate in which this is carried out. It should examine also the role that any siblings play in the shared reading experiences which occur in the home. Other factors such as the views the parents have concerning how and when their children should learn to read and the role that they might play in this process should be studied, along with any influences on reading from outside the family such as nursery school or kindergarten.

More general factors such as the educational level of the parents, the personal developmental history of the children, and the place of television in the children's lives should be examined. Their access to, and experience with, environmental language should be noted in any study being made of the development of emergent reading behaviour in preschool children. Since recent studies by Bissex (1979), Clay (1975) and Chomsky (1971) for example, have demonstrated the importance of the relationships between the development of writing and reading, notice must be taken of the opportunities preschool children have to experiment with and learn the various facets of writing behaviour in the home.

In order to obtain information on this range of topics The Family Reading Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used as a basis for interviewing all the parents of the children involved in this study. This chapter reports and discusses the data resulting from these interviews, all of which were conducted at the beginning of the series of visits to their homes.

Background of the Parents

Since one of the major purposes of this study was to examine the range of factors which influences the development of reading in the naturalistic setting of the home, it was seen as necessary to obtain information concerning the background of the parents of the children involved in the study. To this end, questions were included in The Family Reading Questionnaire which sought information from the parents concerning their educational background and their views as to the importance of reading in their children's development. Information was sought also on their own past reading experiences as children and their present reading habits. Finally, they were questioned as to their thoughts on how children learn to read and why they should learn to read. Some of the information obtained has already been referred to in the previous chapter and the remainder has been reported in this chapter.

Reading Experiences and Reading Habits

Both of Gillian's parents could recall being read to in their homes before going to school, the mother in particular, being able to describe in detail, the warm, family sharing that occurred on these occasions. She remembered that once she had learned to read, she read so much, that her mother had to "push me out to play." The father still had the old set of encyclopedias that he used to read and reread as a boy. Neither parent could recall having had any difficulty in learning to read. The mother reported that she had clear recollections of when she learned to read:

> "I can remember quite distinctly my first year at school I couldn't [read]. I memorized everything like Greg [her son] does. And in fact over the summer I can remember going back to school and I could read."

Both parents read every day in the home from newspapers, magazines or books, although their book reading usually was done after the children went to bed. There was always plenty of adult reading material readily available in the house during the observational visits.

In the case of Kaaren and Sean's parents, the mother knew that she had not been read to as a child. Her father had attended school only until grade eight, and could not read very well. Her mother was working constantly and made it clear to the children that she did not have time to read to them and there were no books around the house to read anyway. She recalled reading a lot at school and neither mother nor father could recall having any difficulty in learning to read. The father had no recollection of being read to in his home, but he read a "fair amount" now both at home and at the university. The mother frankly admitted that she was not a reader and had not been one since around her first year at university. It was noticeable that there was generally little adult reading material readily available in the house during the observational visits.

The children's live-in baby sitter was interviewed also and she made the comment that she had stopped engaging in personal, leisure-time reading during the day because as soon as she would begin reading Sean would come with a book and want her to read to him. She commented that "once you read a book to him, he wants you to keep going." Sometimes when she used to read to herself, the children would go and get some of their books and sit beside her and look at them quietly.

In the case of Jennifer, the early reading experiences of the parents were entirely different. The father was sure that he and his brothers and sisters were not read to in the home. The mother on the other hand had vivid recollections of being read to by both her parents, and particularly her father, who always took the time to read to her. Her home had a plentiful supply of books as they lived very close to the local library, which they were always visiting. She recalls having had favourite books which she read and re-read. Both parents read at home regularly, the mother especially reading a great deal, but their book reading was done usually after the children were in bed. There was always a plentiful supply of adult reading material available in the home.

It can be seen then, that three of the six parents had come from book oriented homes, two had come from homes where books had played virtually no part in their early years, while one could not remember what his experiences had been. It is probably no coincidence, that the two mothers who had the most vivid recollections of being read to in the home were the two parents who engaged in the most leisure-type reading. As the report will reveal later, they were also the two parents who read most to their children. They were also the only parents involved in the study, who did not work on a regular basis, outside the home.

Studies made of children who read early, have revealed usually, that at least one and often both of the parents were readers themselves. The parents of Krippner's (1963) early reader, for example, were described as "avid readers" and many of those parents of the 36 grade two, four and six avid readers who Cebuliak (1977) studied, had similar characteristics to their children. Durkin (1966) makes the observation of the parents of the early readers in her Californian study that "... as a group ... the parents of the 49 subjects not only could read but did" (p. 48).

Attitudes Towards Early Reading

In her comments concerning the attitudes of the parents towards the early reading development of the 32 early readers she studied in Scotland, Clark (1976) reported that:

> ... most were embarrassed that they had sent one of their children to school already reading! They felt guilty that their child was reading; indeed one or two had even tried to prevent it, while another had been approached by her neighbour who thought she must have brought pressure to bear on the child. (p. 35)

Durkin (1966) also refers to similar views that were expressed by some of the parents of the early readers in her study, while Ollila (1972) makes the point that much of the opposition that has been expressed towards young children learning to read before their entering grade one is based on a concern for how they might be taught, rather than their actually learning to read.

None of the parents of the children involved in this study were opposed to their children learning to read before going to school, and none of them had endeavoured to teach any of their children to read. Both of Gillian's parents saw learning to read as a "natural" process, a view that probably developed as a result of their son Gregory learning to read without any instruction in the formal sense before he entered grade one. The father however, was firmly convinced that children had to know "the sounds of the letters" before they could read, despite the fact that his own son had learned to read with only intermittent, haphazard, informal teaching in the area. The attitude of both parents to their role in their children's development in reading was perhaps best expressed by the following comment made by the father in reply to a question concerning whether or not they had ever tried to teach their children to read:

> We approach reading as an experience that they would enjoy to have. Not that we were trying to teach them to read nor did we get upset that they couldn't read. Some of the things we pushed

> if you like or made them aware of on a repetitive basis were the letters of the alphabet and then more with Gregory than with Gillian, although we tried it with Gillian, but she was never really interested in it - the sounds of the letters, the association of what kind of sound does that letter make. But in terms of teaching them to read I don't think either one of us really set out to do that. What we were trying to do was to show them an appreciation of literature.

Neither of the parents of Kaaren and Sean were opposed to their children learning to read before they went to school, but had no intention of trying to teach them. The mother commented that:

> I'm interested in them learning about life activities and dealing with concepts and more with that than developing skill in reading.

Jennifer's parents also were not opposed to children learning to read before they go to school, although they had some reservations about children learning to read in the home. They stated that they would not make a conscious effort to teach either of their children. The father was strongly of the opinion that children learn how to read and that we must not force them to do so. He commented:

> I don't think you teach children to read. I think children learn how to read. People were learning how to read without formal education.

The mother believed that the parents should work in association with the school in assisting their children to learn to read. It was interesting to note that she thought that:

> After Jennifer has had two years at nursery school she will probably be ready to start reading.

Even though, as this report will demonstrate, Jennifer was making rapid progress in her literacy learning, the mother saw this as a period of readiness for future learning. This learning would occur when Jennifer went to an elementary school rather than her actually engaging in the process of learning to read while being involved in a variety of book experience situations in the home.

Throughout these observations made by the parents related to the early reading development of their children, lay the underlying theme that they did not want them to learn to read if this meant forcing them to do so through the formal teaching of reading skills. They appeared to view reading instruction as being characterized by the features that Hymes (1970) and Sheldon (1962) observed during their visits to kindergartens. These researchers reported that reading instruction in the classrooms that they observed was carried out in a serious, no-nonsense atmosphere, where much of the learning was of a silent, passive kind involving a great deal of paper and pencil activities and the use of irrelevant materials.

The parents did not appear to want to engage in any process that would interfere with the child's natural developmental growth. In this they seemed to be expressing the views held by Ilg and Ames (1972) when they commented on the problems associated with early reading instruction:

> Certainly any mother will quite naturally let her child go as far as his spontaneous interests suggest along these lines... [but] ... Allowing a child to learn is one thing. Formal teaching in the preschool years is another. It is unfortunate when a parent thinks only of teaching a child. He then loses the quality of living, the experiencing together that is the stuff of their relationship. (p. 324)

In her comments concerning a discussion that she had with a friend Jennifer's mother seemed to sum up the views of all the parents involved in this study with regard to their attitudes towards their children learning to read during their preschool years:

> A friend of mine has a little girl who also likes books and she asked me if we would teach Jennifer to read. I don't think we will make a conscious effort to do it. We have her for such a short time before she starts school and there are so many other things to do and enjoy. ... I said I didn't think I would bother. I would just read her a lot of stories ... If it's fun [learning to read] and she wants to do it, we'll help her.

Background of the Children

Just as information was obtained on the background of the parents, so too was similar information sought concerning the background of the children involved in the study. Most of the information obtained has been recorded in the previous chapter. In the following sections the responses of the parents to questions concerning their children's attitudes towards books and reading have been reported and the nature of the children's book environment has been examined.

Attitudes Towards Books and Reading

The single most impressive factor concerning the children's reading behaviour that resulted from the many hours of observing them in the company of books during the period of this study, lay in the quality of their attitude towards and interest in books and reading. No difficulty was experienced throughout the study in obtaining data since the children seemed to be prepared, at any time of the day or evening, to spend long periods interacting with books in various ways: with their parents, with the investigator, with siblings, or on their own.

In an interview conducted with Gillian's mother during the last visit to their home, she reported that Gillian's day usually started with books:

> She [Gillian] comes in in the morning, doesn't like breakfast first thing in the morning, sits around for half-an-hour. She grabs a book and reads to herself. And she's reading. She asks me for words.

And later:

> She has done this for a long while. She has sat and looked at books, but now she does it quite deliberately ... Reading to herself on a daily basis.

On the weekends when the children are sometimes up before their parents, Gillian's mother commented that:

> If they're up before us in the morning it's very quiet. They will both be sitting with their books.

And later:

> They love reading as you can tell. Books - I would say a book is their favourite activity.

She estimated that Gillian would spend "at least one to two hours" with books, children's magazines and 'story' records every day. During this time she would 'read' to herself, to her stuffed leopard, or to an unseen audience, be read to by her mother, explore her magazines or listen to a story on a record and follow it along in a book. When her brother was home, he would read to her occasionally and every evening before going to bed either the mother or the father would read several stories to both children.

Reference has already been made in a previous section of this report to Gillian's inordinately long attention span when interacting with books and how she would spend most of the day doing this and still want a bedtime story in the evening. It seemed that even by five years of age, Gillian was to use Sutton's (1969) term "book hungry," and had been so for some time.

In the case of Kaaren and Sean, the same intensity of interest in books and reading was not apparent to the investigator. Although no difficulty was ever experienced in obtaining and maintaining their attention with books, and they obviously derived a great deal of pleasure from book experience situations, they did not spend the same amount of time with them as did Gillian. There was not nearly the same number of books available in the home and whereas in Gillian's case there was always a pile of children's books lying in the lounge, Kaaren's and Sean's books were almost always stored on the shelves in Sean's bedroom, and as soon as they were read they were put away again. Apart from that, the time spent by the parents reading to the children was considerably less than in Gillian's case as both parents worked outside the home and the live-in baby sitter did not read to them very often.

The mother could never remember having "to struggle to get Kaaren's attention" when she was reading to her, but that she did have to struggle with Sean:

> Sean was slower in giving us his attention but once it was there his interest has been as intense as Kaaren's.

Kaaren's father reported that she will spend time on her own with books and that:

> There is a tendency for Kaaren to take a book to bed and often read it before going to sleep - usually one of the books that has just been read to her.

She also "reads" to Sean on occasions from books that had been read to her on a repetitive basis. The mother reported that Sean also had started "reading" to himself, and the live-in baby sitter commented that when he was scolded by his parents he would go and pick up a book and start looking at it. She also indicated that they used their record-story books regularly during the day when the parents were at work:

> Everyday they like to listen to these. They are not allowed to use the stereo. I put it on for them and if they leave the room and then come back - they just pick up the book, listen to the record and turn the book to the right page. They know everything that's happening in the book. Whether it's from memorization I don't know. They won't listen to the record unless they have the book.

It was evident that for the mother at least, reading to the children was done more from a sense of duty than from a basis of sheer enjoyment. It was very noticeable that frequently, the investigator would be met at the door by the children with books in their hands asking to be read to. Undoubtedly the pressure of available time was felt by the mother and in subtle and sometimes obvious ways, this pressure was conveyed to the children in this household. Despite these pressures however, Sean and Kaaren had developed a reasonably strong interest in books and reading and given the opportunity, would interact for long periods of time in book experience situations.

Jennifer's interest in books and reading was on a similar level to that of Gillian. She had been read to from a very early age, both throughout the day and in the evening. It was noticeable that the mothers of both of these children would usually read to them on request and invariably carried out the task in a relaxed, unpressured manner.

Both of Jennifer's parents commented that she had always been extremely interested in books and reading. On many occasions they had put her to bed and turned off the light after reading several stories to her, only to go up later and find that she turned on her light and was 'reading' to her teddy bear, or that she had fallen asleep over her books. She would also bring books into her play with a friend as her mother reported:

> She has a little friend Katy who comes over and they will do puzzles and colour, and look at books, or play dolls. They do basically the same things as when on their own. They will simulate reading - they sit down in little chairs and turn pages and make up a story.

Jennifer would also on occasions "read" to her brother Christopher, and her mother reported that during the day she frequently would find her sitting quietly on her own looking at and 'reading' her books. When the opportunity was provided for her to be read to either by her parents or by the investigator she would invariably select four or five of her favourite books, and it was usually the available time and energy on the part of the reader, rather than her attention span that caused some of them not to be read.

All four children involved in this study then, demonstrated considerable interest in books and reading. For reasons that will be referred to in greater detail, later in this report, Gillian's and Jennifer's interest in and attitude towards books and reading were at a higher level of intensity and development than Sean's and Kaaren's, but all children demonstrated very positive attitudes towards their books and possessed very long attention spans when being read to.

Reference has already been made in Chapter II of this report, to Church's (1966) work in recording the case histories of three "babies." One of the mothers in that report commented that Benjamin, her son, at 2 years 1 month developed "A sudden and consuming interest in being read to ..." (p. 155). Church also reported a similar growth of interest in being read to in Ruth and Debbie, the other two children in the study.

The importance and strength of this orientation or "set towards literacy" that is given the opportunity to develop in young children from their experiences with books and reading is difficult, if not impossible to measure in a quantitative sense. However, Cebuliak's (1977) study of 36 avid readers offers us a very positive statement as to the importance of early book experience in the development of these children. He observed that "Early parental involvement in the form of bedtime stories was universal in the case of these avid readers..." (p. 206).

Two of the children involved in the study being reported here, displayed an extremely powerful interest in books and reading. The other two could be described as having a strong interest. They devoted a great deal of their time and energy in activities involving books and written language, much of it of a self-directed nature. The origin of the source of this interest and energy in these children seems almost certainly to have emanated from the book experiences provided by their parents from very early in their lives. Through being immersed regularly in warm, intensely pleasurable experiences involving books and language, books themselves soon became identified as the source of the enjoyment for these children. This seemed to provide the basis for them developing a powerful inner drive to master their intricacies for themselves.

The Range, Availability and Sources of Printed Materials in the Home

Since one of the conditions necessary for the children to be involved in this study was that they be read to on a regular basis, it could be expected that each home would have a plentiful supply of children's books and other printed materials suitable for them. And this proved to be the case, but not only was the range of printed material available in each home different, the source of the materials and their accessibility to the children also tended to be different. Perhaps the most interesting factor present in all three homes, was that none of the parents involved in the study has any specific criteria which they used consistently for selecting books for their children, other than the need for the books to have "plenty of interesting pictures." They appeared to work from the basis of a general idea of what they thought the children would like, when they were either buying books as presents or selecting books for them from the library. The fact that the books should not have too much text in relation to the number of pictures was referred to by some of the parents, but none of them mentioned the specific quality of the language as being a criteria that they used as a basis for book selection. Only one parent made use of author's names beyond that of Dr. Seuss as a guide to selecting books for her children.

In Gillian's home there was a library of approximately 140 books, and most of these were shared in terms of ownership between the two children. Some, however, were personal possessions and some of these were kept on personal book shelves in their bedroom, which they shared. It was noticeable that both children knew very clearly which books came into this cateogry, and at times made their ownership known. Ownership seemed to be very important to each child, although the parents were more in favour of their sharing.

As well as books, two children's magazines, Playmates and Highlights arrived in the home through the mail regularly. Both of these were American publications and the parents did not know of any suitable children's magazines published in Canada. There were thirteen books with accompanying records and seven long playing story records, without accompanying books in the home. The mother also visited the library approximately every two weeks where both children held cards, and she selected between ten and twenty books for their use. Neither of the children accompanied her on these visits since she did not drive a car, and went to the library while the children were at school.

Of the books in the permanent home library, 55 of these were from the Disney Book Club, to which the parents had been subscribing for over four years. The reasons they gave for maintaining their membership were that the children had always looked forward to their arrival through the mail, had enjoyed the stories, and what seemed to be most important, it brought in a regular supply of new books for which they felt they had a responsibility as parents, and it saved them the problem of having to go to a bookshop or supermarket and make decisions about what to buy.

Most of their books in the house had been given to the children as presents for various occasions, and very few had been bought at the specific request of the children. The mother could remember only one occasion when Gillian had pressured her grandfather into buying her a particular book and that was the result of seeing a Disney World book advertised on television. The parents had at irregular and rare intervals, succumbed to requests from the children to buy books for each of them on an incidental basis when they were all visiting a supermarket. They generally resisted these kinds of requests, mainly on the basis of cost and the fact that they had a new book coming into the home every month anyway. It was interesting to note here, that it was not the quality of the books available in the supermarket that stopped their being purchased.

All the printed materials and the story records were readily accessible to Gillian. It was noticeable that both children took very good care of their books, and even their oldest ones, were still in good condition. No restrictions were placed on Gillian taking any books from the shelves at any time of the day or evening. She even had access to her brother's personally owned books, although occasionally, he would voice protest over her using some of them. Books did not have to be put back on the shelves immediately after use and the current set of children's library books was usually stored on a coffee table in the lounge/living room. There was always a supply of both new books in the home and some old favourites readily available to Gillian. She also followed a practice of storing other favourite books on her bookshelf in the children's bedroom, but the bulk of their library was stored on shelves in their "play room" in the basement. If asked for a particular title, she generally could locate it quickly. It was significant that when the family moved to Alberta, most of the children's books were taken with them. Whenever they visited grandparents for even a short period of time, some books were always taken along.

Gillian was permitted to put the story records on the stereo unit and the mother reported that she did so regularly on two or three occasions throughout each week. She also spent a great deal of time with the two children's magazines which came into the home. Her particular interest was in the various puzzles and games contained in them, although stories would be read from them from time to time.

It can be seen by this outline that Gillian's home could be described as "book oriented." There was never any shortage of books to be read and there was a constant movement of books in and out of the house, plus an extensive, regular supply in a permanent and constantly growing library. Even when the family was on the move, some of the children's books were taken with them.

There were approximately 70 children's books in Kaaren's and Sean's home and these were stored on shelves in Sean's bedroom. Their ownership was shared at the instigation of the parents, although both children readily identified which of the books belonged to each of them. At no stage were either of the children observed in asserting their ownership, but the principle of sharing was constantly enunciated by the mother in particular, so the children may have been abiding by the rules by not claiming ownership publicly.

The children also received a copy of Sesame Street magazine through the mail on a regular basis. Prior to their moving to Wolfville, the mother used to visit the children's section of a library and select ten books each month for reading to the children. The Wolfville library hours however were so limited, that she had not started visiting it in order to obtain books for the children. Towards the end of the visits made by the investigator, she started going to the Wolfville library, occasionally taking the children with her and letting them select some of their books. The investigator accompanied them on one of these visits. The children also had seven long playing story records with their accompanying books.

Both parents expressed the view that books selected for the children should have plenty of suitable illustrations, but neither made any comment concerning the quality of language for a children's book. The mother, in commenting on the need for the books chosen for reading to them to offer the opportunity to learn "about life activities" remarked:

> "That's why I like a wide range of books - different experiences, dealing with values that I think are important. Sometimes I talk about these with the children, depending on how tired I am.

The father also appears to have seen reading to the children as at least partially educative. Approximately a year previously he had bought them a series of four National Geographic Young Explorer books, but was somewhat mystified when he found that the children did not like them and did not want them read. Sean would have been approximately two years of age at that stage, and Kaaren three years three months. They were, however, beginning to demonstrate an interest in them he claimed, when the study began, although throughout the period of the visits they were never seen being used.

The children had ready access to their books throughout the day, but it was noticeable that they were never left lying around after they had been read. For the bedtime story session in the evening, the books were obtained from the shelves, and after the reading had finished, the children had to return them there. Their Sesame Street magazines however were left lying on the small writing desk used by the children in the living room. Their books were well-cared for and carefully maintained, but the copies of the magazines were allowed to be cut up, coloured in, and scribbled on. The live-in baby sitter commented on the fact that for three or four days after the arrival of the magazine, the children, and especially Kaaren, spent a great deal of time on it, doing the puzzles and the various activities outlined in it. They were able to listen to their story records, only when adults operated the stereo unit, but this did not appear to restrict them since there was always an adult available in the house.

Apart from the library books, there was no regular supply of books coming into the home. Most of the books had been received as presents over the years, and occasionally the parents would buy a book that they thought the children would like. They did not however, make a practice of visiting a bookshop for that purpose. Apart from the points already made concerning the selection of books, they had little idea as to what to look for in a children's book, nor did they know of any sources of information on this topic.

Although there was an adequate supply of books available in this home, it could not be described as book-oriented. The homily that "there is a place for everything and everything has its place" clearly applied to the children's books, and they were very aware of this. They seldom left a book lying around after it was read. They had easy access to them from suitable shelves, but during the investigator's visits at least, and from the observations of the live-in baby sitter, Kaaren and Sean did not spend a great deal of time in self-directed, independent activity with their books. The regular demands to "put your books away," may have been having the effect of influencing their decision to not even take them off their shelves.

There were approximately 194 children's books in Jennifer's home, most of them belonging to her. Apart from that, the father brought home a book from the school library, virtually every day, and returned it the next day. This practice had gone on since Jennifer was approximately a year old and the mother described the procedure that has been followed:

> Usually what happens is E. [the father] will come home with a book and she will have to read it after supper and when we've finished with it she has to put it on the breakfast table. If he forgets to take it she is quite upset because she thinks she is not going to get another book that night.

Jennifer received the Sesame Street magazine on a regular basis through the mail, which she looked forward to eagerly. She also had eight long playing records with accompanying stories.

Most of the books were Jennifer's and she displayed ownership of them and looked after them with great care. The mother reported that her brother Christopher still damaged books, so was seldom permitted to use them on his own. Jennifer had her own bookshelf and the mother commented that:

> She has books which she calls her good books which she doesn't like Christopher touching.

She kept approximately twenty books in her room, another sixty were stored on shelves in a reading and playroom next to the bedroom, and the remaining hundred or so were stacked in various places around the house. Although all the books were accessible to Jennifer at least, those that were stacked in piles were of course difficult to select from. There was invariably a selection of ten to twenty books available in the family living room downstairs and there was no pressure placed on Jennifer to put the books away after they had been used.

The greater majority of the books had been received by Jennifer as gifts but the mother commented that she visited the local bookstore and bought books on impulse on occasions. Jennifer would go with her on these visits but although she identified books there that she had at home, she never asked her mother to purchase any of them. The only time that she asked her mother to buy any books was when she saw a big basket full of second-hand Dr. Seuss books in a drug store. The mother reported that:

> ... They were only a quarter a piece so we bought half a dozen and she was really excited. I let her go through the cart and pick out what she wanted.

Books were bought "mainly for enjoyment" and although the emphasis had been on picture story books in the main, the mother was "trying to buy a few books which have a longer story line and fewer pictures." Although there were some books of poor quality in the home, the greater majority of them were of very high quality with titles such as Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are and Eastman's Are you my Mother?

With a large library of books available in the home, the regular, almost daily arrival of a new title brought in by the father from the school library and a personal copy of a magazine coming in every month, Jennifer could be described as being immersed in books. They were readily accessible to her and the fact that she was permitted to claim ownership for most of them made her book environment even more secure. And her actions with her books reflected her confidence with them. In a very real sense, books and reading had been able to become part of this very young girl's life.

It can be seen then that these three homes, although similar in their efforts to provide a book environment for their children, were different in both obvious and subtle ways, as to how they attempted to make this provision. These differences and similarities were frequently reflected in the children's attitudes and activities related to books and reading. The following summary is not an attempt to compare these similarities and differences in a quantitative manner. It is an attempt to show how these differences had their effects on the reading development of the children concerned.

The range of books available in each home varied from adequate in the case of Kaaren and Sean to exceptional in the case of Jennifer. But simply having a quantity of books available is not enough for a home to become book oriented in a true sense, and for the children to gain full benefit from their presence. Both the quality of the books, the way they are used, their accessibility to the children and the problem of ownership all become very important factors in the reading development of the children.

Although all three homes contained many books which could be described as "good quality children's literature," they also contained many books that were of poor quality. Many of the poor quality ones of course had been received as gifts from relations, but it was significant that only one of the parents visited a reputable bookstore with any degree of regularity to preview and select books. No parent consulted any reference of what was available in children's books, and their criteria for selecting books appeared to rest mainly on an intuitively based judgement as to what they thought the children would like. This was coupled with an assessment of the quality of the illustrations and the proportion of the print and the pictures in a book. Dr. Seuss' books excluded, only Jennifer's mother used author's names as a possible criteria for selecting a book. Gillian's parents used a book club to make most of their decisions as to what to buy in the way of books, and continued to accept, in a non-critical way, the quality of these books that continued to arrive year after year.

When the children were given the opportunity to select what was to be read to them from previously read material it was clearly evident, that they knew what a good children's book was. Only very rarely did they select mediocre material, and when this did occur, it was usually a story that had been read over and over again to them, before they had been able to select what was to be read for themselves.

Apart from such factors as the quantity and quality of the books available in the homes, the use that was made of them and their accessibility appear to be critically important contributing factors in the children's developing, emergent reading behaviours. Where the parents or other adults present in the home, were ready, willing and able to read to their children at various times throughout the day or evening, books tend to be readily accessible in the family living room. When these books were present constantly in areas where the children spent their time in independent play or interacting with adults, they tended to be incorporated into these activities with much greater frequency than if they were hidden from view on shelves in a bedroom. These conditions and their related outcomes were present in the cases of Gillian and Jennifer.

On the other hand, when parents had limited time available to spend with their children in book experience situations and where the pressure of time available to work in the house demanded that everything had to be put away as soon as it was used, the amount of possible interaction that occurred between the children and their books was considerably reduced. The subtle effect on children of knowing that if they take a book off their shelves and left it lying around after they have spent some time with it, that they might be scolded for not putting it away, may have caused them to refrain from engaging in book activity.

The lack of the visible presence of books in the family living room may also have reduced the possibility of incidental story-reading taking place between parents and children. It may be that, where parents are pressured for time and do not have a well-developed love of books and reading they may instinctively reduce the possibility of incidental demands being made on their time through their children asking to be read to. These conditions and their related outcomes could have been present in the case of Kaaren and Sean.

Another factor that became apparent as exerting a significant influence on the reading development of these children lay in the area of the ownership or possession of the books in the home. In a sense there was a continuum existing among the three families. In the case of Kaaren and Sean, a very strong emphasis was placed by the parents on the value of sharing the ownership of the books. Rarely did the children ever claim ownership of one and when they did the parents would almost invariably direct a remark to them concerning the fact that "books were shared in this house," even though the book in question, may have been received by the child as a gift. All the books were kept on the shelves in Sean's room because there were no shelves in Kaaren's room.

Gillian and Gregory had a large number of books that had a shared ownership, but they also claimed separate ownership of a quantity of books that they had received as gifts. Although both parents favoured sharing in this area, when dispute arose they usually ruled in favour of the owner. The children always knew exactly which book belonged to whom. Both children had shelves in their room where they could keep their own books, but neither they, nor the parents, rigorously maintained these as completely personal collections.

Probably the best example of Gillian and Gregory's sense of ownership occurred when both of them received "personalized" books as presents at Christmas. These were books where the original characters' names have been substituted with the children's names and those of their pets. Gillian in particular, demonstrated great pride in the ownership of this book, carrying it around with her from time to time and very quickly making it her own in another sense. She learned to 'read' it with a high degree of accuracy, despite the fact that it was 24 pages long, with a considerable amount of text on each page.

In the case of Kaaren and Sean then, ownership of books was almost totally shared, and with Gillian and Gregory, both shared and personal. With Jennifer however, virtually all the books in the home were allowed to be claimed by her. It was not unusual for the mother to remark in Jennifer's and Christopher's presence how he still ripped books, but that she, Jennifer, was very careful with them. This was done probably in attempt to try and have Christopher stop the behaviour, but it appeared to provide Jennifer with a strong reason for maintaining possession of her books. Reference has already been made to the fact that she maintained a special shelf for her "good books" in her bedroom, and Christopher was not allowed to touch these. Most of the books in the house had in fact been given to Jennifer as presents, but whereas, in the case of Kaaren and Sean, and to a certain extent with Gillian and Gregory, ownership was deemphasized and sharing was the behaviour that was favoured, with Jennifer, the opposite appeared to be the case.

Although there were many other factors at work in the case of Christopher, it is not without significance that his attitude towards books and reading was almost as negative as his sister's attitude was positive. Christopher owned few books and he was seldom permitted to play independently with them. This investigator gave him Sutton's My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes for a Christmas present and was interested to hear both parents comment with some surprise a few weeks later, how Christopher had become very attached to this book and had carried it around with him, even to the extent of taking it in the car with him when they went out. This, they claimed, was the first book in which he had shown any great interest.

Availability of a range of suitable books, ready access to these, and the ownership of at least some of them, all seem to be important contributing factors in children's constantly developing reading behaviour. King and Friesen (1972) in their study of the characteristics of early readers observed that:

> Almost all children had access to easy reading material in the home. Some parents mentioned having extensive book collections for children. (p. 152)

Just as in many aspects of human behaviour, whether it be in collecting stamps, original works of art, vintage cars or in books, interest and ownership appear to go hand-in-hand. For the children involved in this study, both the environment of books and identified ownership of some of them, seemed to be closely related to the attitude the children displayed towards books and reading.

Reading and the Bedtime Story

Although the major focus of this study was to be the direct and participant observation of children engaged in shared book experience situations in the naturalistic setting of their home it was considered important also to obtain information from the parents concerning the past history of the children's experience in these situations. Questions were asked during the interviews to establish as clearly as possible when and why the parents commenced reading to their children and they were asked to comment with as much accuracy as possible on the frequency and duration of the occasions when they engaged in this activity. As well as this, information was sought from them on their attitudes towards the task, the procedures that were followed to select the stories to be read, and they were asked a wide range of questions concerning their particular behaviours during their reading. The data related to the parents' responses to topics are reported and discussed in the following section of this chapter.

When And Why Did It Start?

In the case of Gillian the parents had begun reading nursery rhymes to her at the age of four months as a result of their positive experience of starting reading to their son when he was only two months old. This exceptionally early start had been stimulated by the thought that reading to their child would assist in his oral language development. By the time Gillian was born however, the parents were obtaining so much pleasure from reading to Gregory and he was responding to the activity so positively, that their purposes for reading to Gillian became wider than aiming at assisting her oral language development. They saw it as an opportunity to interact warmly with their children and share a common experience which could be talked about.

Although the parents of Kaaren and Sean were not certain when they commenced reading to them they thought that with Kaaren it was before she was a year old and with Sean when he was approximately 18 months old. They both reasoned that reading to their children forced them "to spend time with them." They felt that it was a "good preparation for bed" and that it "quietens them down and relaxes them."

Jennifer's parents started reading to her when she was six months of age, initially using little cloth books of nursery rhymes and then short stories with plenty of pictures. The mother gave as a reason for starting reading to her, the fact that she had enjoyed being read to so much, she wanted Jennifer to have a similar experience. It was not long before she started responding to the rhythm of the language and pointing to the pictures and this caused the amount of reading being done to increase. The mother reported that the first two word sentence that she heard Jennifer utter was when she thrust a book at the mother one day with the order to "Read it."

Apart from providing the opportunity for a warm and mutually enjoyable interaction to occur between parent and child and a possible medium through which the child's oral language could be developed, none of the parents were aware of any specific benefits that might result in a "learning to read sense" from reading to their children from an early age. These parents reflected similar views to those observed by Holdaway (1979) when he reported that:

> Everyone agreed that it was a 'Good Thing' to read to young children, and the virtues of the bedtime story were praised for reasons which remained vague and sentimental. (p. 39)

Although all of these parents expected their children to begin to learn to deal with the complexities of oral language virtually from birth, none of them had any expectations concerning their beginning to learn to deal with complexities of written language from the same point in time. Immersing the children in oral language being used was seen as an essential condition for oral language learning to occur. Immersing them in written language through the medium of books was seen as a means of giving and receiving pleasure from the interactions which occurred, with some possible oral language learning outcomes being facilitated, but was not seen as an essential condition for written language learning to begin to occur.

6

Frequency and Duration

The nightly bedtime story had been a feature of Gillian's family life since her brother was two months old. Even when the mother was working on night shift as a nurse in Alberta and he was under pressure of time from his doctoral studies, the father reported that the children never went to sleep without several stories being read to them by him. But reading to these children was not only a nightly event. It occured at any time during the day or evening, whenever one of the parents was available and willing to read. It was apparent that these children would listen to old favourites and new stories being read to them for extremely long periods of time and that this activity was a feature of their family life.

It is important to note with regard to Gillian however, that up until her brother Gregory went to school on a full-time basis, she was seldom read to on her own. Most of the story reading she experienced up until she was 5 years 3 months old, was shared with her older brother and both parents commented on the control he exercised over her participation in any reading. After the brother started school, the mother commenced reading to Gillian for approximately 30 minutes every morning. This caused some significant changes to occur in the reading interaction that took place between mother and daughter, and these will be referred to later in this report.

The story reading that occurred in Kaaren's and Sean's home was mostly of the bedtime variety. Due to the parents' busy schedule, reading to the children was timetabled almost at a specific time of the evening throughout the week and lasted for between 15 and 30 minutes. The mother's comments perhaps describes the situation the best:

> Reading to the children has been fairly mechanistic; it's been every night and has been consistent. But in the daytime with the baby sitter it may be different.

While the family was living with her mother for the period when Kaaren was from 15 to 24 months old, she was read to a great deal by the grandmother throughout the day from a very limited range of books since most of her own books were in storage. It was during these reading sessions that Kaaren first began to demonstrate her ability to "memorize" the stories. Sean was in his first year of life during this period and was not included in these story reading activities, since it was felt that he was too young to participate in them.

The differences reported by the parents, in Sean's slower developing interest in being read to and the difficulty they experienced in obtaining his attention when reading, may have been an outcome of his never having experienced as Kaaren did, nine months of a calm, relaxed daily story time with the grandmother. Much of his bedtime story activity had taken place with his mother under rather rigorous time constraints and through the day, the live-in baby sitter deliberately avoided situations when she might feel compelled to read to him. Sean's involvement with books therefore, had not been of the warm, unhurried kind. This may have been one of the causes of the different attitude towards reading between Kaaren and himself.

Jennifer's experience was similar to Gillian's in the amount and frequency of the story reading that was done with her throughout the day and evening. Both her mother and father read to her virtually on request, although the mother, because she was with her during the day, read much more to her than the father. Almost every day several stories were read, and it was only under exceptional circumstances that Jennifer would go to bed without a bedtime story.

When even a superficial examination is made of the time Gillian and Jennifer in particular were involved in being read to over a period of a year, it can be seen that it would amount to many hundreds of hours. The number of books that would be read to them during a similar period of time would be well over a thousand. Many of these would of course be read repetitively. Even Sean and Kaaren, despite the restricted time that was allocated for this activity, would be with their parents for approximately two hundred hours each year. In that time, with three books usually being read each session, about one thousand would be used. And these estimated figures do not include their independent activity with books.

The effects and results of these literacy-oriented years are what this study has been concerned with primarily and the future chapters of this report examine their outcomes in some detail.

Parents' Attitudes to the Task

All the parents expressed positively, their liking for the task of reading to their children, although the attitude of Kaaren's and Sean's father could best be described as lukewarm. The investigator's observations of them engaged in the task, constantly reinforced their statements. Even Kaaren's and Sean's mother, who frequently put herself under pressure of time to read to the children, exhibited her liking for the task by the manner in which she read the stories and interacted with the children. At times she even went beyond the scheduled half hour, and read more than the allotted three stories. One of the problems she regularly experienced however, was that the task of reading to the children made her yawn constantly and feel very sleepy, and this, as much as the pressure of time made her stop on some occasions.

Perhaps the best description of the parents' attitude towards the task is contained in a reply to a question concerning this aspect of their story reading behaviour that was made by Gillian's father. He commented:

> It's a time to be together. Sure we enjoy it very much. It's fun you know. They enjoy it...

> When a child is very young, you put the child
> on your lap and it's a warm environment.

This "warm environment" pervaded almost every shared book experience situation observed throughout the observations made for this study. The only time it was ever disturbed was when sibling rivalry occurred between the children. This usually developed as a result of the younger child attempting to participate in the reading in some way, and the older child objecting to this. This behaviour however, was only once permitted to interfere with the story reading situation.

There was little doubt, as a result of observing the parents reading to their children on many, many occasions, that their positive approach to the task and their obvious enjoyment of it created an intensely secure and loving family situation that was repeated over and over again. Since books became for the children, the vehicle through which they could experience this warm, human sharing, it seems entirely possible, that apart from their story, language and pictorial qualities, books came to be seen by these children as sources of pleasure, enjoyment and security in themselves. Perhaps this was why Sean would go and bury himself in one of the books, after being scolded for some misdemeanour.

Holdaway (1979) in discussing the situation that is created when children, books, and their parents come together, believes that "... there is something emancipating in the experience which transcends normal time and space." He sees the nature of the relationship that occurs between the parent, the child and the book as being very special to the situation where the parent is giving the child complete attention and where distractions are seldom allowed to occur. As a result of being able to produce wonderful stories confidently and continuously from seemingly just looking at books, the parent is able in the eyes of the child to grow into a super being, derived of course from constant association with the richness of the literature being used. Holdaway concludes by stating that :

> ... There is a feeling of security and special worth arising from the quality of the attention being received. Thus the child develops strongly positive associations with the flow of story and language and with the physical characteristics of the books. [Holdaway's emphasis]. (p. 40)

The parents' attitude towards the task of reading to and with their children then, may well be a critically important factor in the growth of their emergent reading behaviour since the environment which is created in these book experience situations may have a profound effect on the development of the children's attitudes towards books and reading.

Book Selection

Book selection, as it is discussed in this section, examines the problem of how books were selected for story reading. The most important factor in book selection was whether the children or the parents took responsibility for the choosing of the story or stories to be read. Other factors that appeared to influence this decision making process were the ready availability of books in the place in the home where stories are read, whether or not a book was due to be returned to the library, and whether it was a favourite story or not.

In Gillian's case both parents commented that the children usually chose the books to be read, although limits were placed on the number selected. This policy was confirmed through subsequent observations. The only time that the parents selected a particular book was when it was one to be returned to the library and had not, up until that time been read. The recency of a particular book's entry into the house and its ready availability in the family living room appeared to be factors that influenced the children's decisions. Old favourites were chosen regularly and it did not seem to matter to either of the children, that a book that one of them chose had been read many, many times previously. Even if the children knew the story off by heart, they would still select it and the parents would read it without protest.

The situation was similar in Jennifer's home where most of the selection was left in her hands. She usually chose several books to be read from the bookshelves or from the books available in the living room. Again, old favourites were selected regularly, but the new book that the father had brought home from school each day was usually read so that it could be returned the next day. The mother commented:

> She goes through a period where she may want you to read the same book over and over again and then put it away for a month, or so. ... One of the first books she really liked was Old MacDonald Had a Farm and she used to try and make the sounds of the animals. Even when she wants a book over and over, we read it. But she doesn't usually just bring one book - usually four or five .... She particularly likes rhyming books where she can put in the ending. Especially if she is going to read it to herself or to her dolls.

It can be seen then, that no restrictions were placed on the books selected to be read to Jennifer, and that, like Gillian's parents, even if the same story was chosen many times, it was still read.

Contrasted with the policy followed by Gillian's and Jennifer's parents in the matter of book selections, was that adopted by Kaaren's and Sean's mother. She remained very much in control of the situation as can be seen by her comments:

> I usually select the stories, because I get bored very easily and I like change in the story at the end and one way of insuring that is picking them myself. Sometimes the children ask for a particular story, but I say no, I'm picking the books .... The only exception I made was when Sean was very small, and he only liked a couple of stories .... It drives me bananas to read stories that are repetitive.

During the course of the visits to this home it was noticed that she changed her policy to the extent that frequently she, Kaaren and Sean, would each select a book to be read during the bedtime story period. Even then, she would sometimes avoid reading a "favourite" story by selecting another title in its place. The father, on the other hand followed a different policy, as can be seen by the following comment:

> I'll read the book they ask for, even if it's the same book again and again.

One of the significant features of many of the books the children selected for repeated readings was that their language almost invariably had strong rhythmic and rhyming qualities along with many repetitive lines. Stories such as Clarke's The Three Little Kittens, Seuss' Green Eggs and Ham, Sutton's My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes or Einsel's Did You Ever See? were immensely popular for example. Nursery rhymes and songs follow this pattern also and if we examine primitive cultures and cultures that have a strong oral tradition, we find that repetition, rhyme and rhythm are features of the songs, chants, dances and various linguistic rituals that form the basis of these people's union in shared activities. Holdaway's (1979) sees them as:

> ... primitively satisfying, deeply memorable, and globally meaningful. Much of its [their] power comes from the sense of security generated by repetition, familiarity and universality. (pp. 57,58)

By allowing their children to select the stories that were inwardly satisfying to them, and by willingly acquiescing to their "read it again" demands, the parents of Gillian and Jennifer were providing the opportunity for their families to participate in the transmission of this oral tradition. The power of this tradition could be seen in the number of times some of these stories were read, and the continued enjoyment that was experienced by all those who shared in the activity.

On the other hand, Kaaren's and Sean's potential to engage in this kind of activity had been considerably reduced by the mother's book selection policies, since she was the one who read most frequently to the children. They did however, obtain this type of experience when the father read to them, and Kaaren, when the family was living with the grandmother, gained nine months of story reading that involved a great deal of repeated readings. It was interesting to note, that the mother, in response to a comment made by this investigator concerning the fact that Kaaren was read to repetitively by the grandmother replied:

> That's right! That was the time when I was mentioning to you that Kaaren could tell you the story about the fish. In fact it was aggravating!

Once again then, it can be seen that what might seem to be a rather innocuous aspect of the story reading situation may have a significant influence on this activity and its subsequent effect on the emergent reading behaviour development of the children involved in it.

The Parents' Story Reading Behaviour

The story reading behaviours of the parents includes such aspects as the physical positions of the children, the book, and the parent, the manner in which the story was read, the way questions were handled during the situation, the pointing activity of the parents and the way participation on the part of the children was facilitated and encouraged. The relevant comments made by parents during the initial interviews will be reported here along with the results of some observations made of these behaviours during the course of the study.

In all families it was reported by the parents that they always held the book being read in such a way that the child(ren) could see the print and the pictures on the pages of the book. Subsequent observations supported these remarks and Gillian's father commented that:

> You have to hold your hands very carefully at the bottom of the page so that both of them have an uninterrupted view, otherwise they tell you. They get upset when they can't see.

In the case of Gillian's and Jennifer's parents they all reported, and this again was supported by subsequent observations, that they would occasionally point to particular words of special interest in the text or would run their fingers along under the line of print. Gillian's parents commented, that whereas she would let them do that, Gregory her older brother, would not. None of the parents could report any specific reason for doing this other than developing in the children a general idea that there were words on the page and that they went in a certain direction.

Kaaren's and Sean's mother stated that she never pointed to the print on the page but might occasionally point to certain features in the pictures for various purposes. Observations made of her while reading to the children revealed that she usually sat or lay in such a position that she could not point to anything because she had to use both hands to hold the book. The father, on the other hand did point to the print both to individual words and by running his finger along underneath the words. He did this he said, as a result of taking a speed reading course where a great deal of emphasis was placed on this activity, and he thought that it would help the children to develop their skill in knowing where to look on the page. He commented:

> I guess I do it so that they will realize I'm reading the book and that's where the story is coming from. In church I point to the words of hymns as the kids like to sing along and take part in the service too.

During the reading all parents reported asking questions of the children. Gillian's parents occasionally would ask questions about word meanings or some action that was occurring or about to occur. Kaaren's and Sean's parents tended to ask questions concerning the moral of a story and some were deliberately aimed at stimulating the children's thinking. Jennifer's parents however, tended to focus on what was happening in the pictures or the story. From observing the parents engaged in this process it was noticeable however, that they seldom asked questions that the children could not answer in some way and they never, on any occasion, allowed their questions to interfere with the enjoyment of the story. They all seemed to be extremely sensitive to just how many questions they could ask before the child would begin to lose interest.

A most significant feature of the parents' story reading behaviour appeared when the children asked a question about the action in the story, a word meaning, or some other detail. These questions were always answered simply and directly. The most interesting aspect of their question answer technique was they would frequently use some family experience that the child who was asking the question had been involved in and could relate to.

The style of reading used by each parent was extremely varied, but almost always, their reading was of very high quality. They used good intonation, good phrasing and the speed of reading was usually closely related to the rate at which they talked. It was very noticeable that when the children engaged in reading-like behaviour with a favourite story their phrasing and intonation patterns were adult-like although they seemed to be creating much of their own expression.

The factor that seemed to be most significant as to whether the children attempted to participate in the reading to any degree or not, appeared to be the pace at which the reading was done. The mothers of Gillian, Kaaren and Sean tended to read very quickly and unless they deliberately paused and slowed down during their reading the children did not attempt to participate by mumbling or reading along with them. On the other hand the fathers of these children read much more slowly and as a result of this, the children attempted to participate in the reading much more often with them. In commenting on when Kaaren started engaging in reading-like behaviour, her mother remarked that:

> It all started with my mother. She would read slowly and give Kaaren a chance to think of what the words were going to be and read with her.

All the parents made deliberate attempts to have the children participate in the story reading from time to time. The mother of Kaaren and Sean however, did not start doing this until she began to allow the children to do some selecting of books to be read and they chose books that they knew. When asked about pausing while reading for this purpose, Gillian's father remarked for example, that:

> Yeah. I've done it with stories I know they know and enjoy and some of the words they seem to like, I'll stop and they will finish it.

Sometimes they would deliberately change the words around or miss them out altogether, Jennifer's father for example commented that:

> We try to involve her in the story and she finishes off words. Sometimes I tease her and say something absolutely wrong and she will correct me.

During the course of the observational visits, the parents were observed using these kinds of techniques, especially when reading old favourites.

As could be expected then, the style of the parents' reading and the various techniques they used to involve the children in the activity, all had a role to play in the children's emergent reading behaviour development. In most instances, without being aware of it, they were contributing in quite significant ways to the growth of their children's understanding of what was involved in the process of reading and to many of the important skills required for carrying out the task.

By making certain, for example, that the pages were clearly visible to the children and within easy reach, the parents set up the conditions for the children to become aware, at an implicit level at least, that the story was contained in the print and not only in the pictures. In an attempt to make certain that the children began to develop their understanding of this concept, they would at times, indicate what and where they were reading by pointing to individual words and by running their fingers along under the lines of print. They were not only providing the children with the knowledge of what to look at, albeit at a rudimentary level, they were also establishing for them the directionality principles involved in reading.

Knowing where to look and what to look at have been shown to be very important in learning to read. Sartre (1964) for example, was able to describe quite vividly, how it was not until he had developed this understanding, that he was able to begin to teach himself to read by matching what he was saying with what he was seeing on the pages of one of his favourite stories. As a result of their study, Samuels and Turnure (1974) found that once a group of children who were experiencing difficulty in learning to read, had learned where to direct their attention on the page, their rate of progress became similar to that of children making normal progress in learning to read. Clay (1966), who tested children's mastery of the directionality conventions of print on entry to school, found that they varied greatly in their ability to perform the eye-ear-voice matching task she gave them. These children, who entered the instructional setting of the school with their skill and understanding of the concepts involved in directionality already developed, were children who generally seemed to find the process of learning to read relatively simple and made rapid progress.

Again, by hearing written language read with all its nuances, pauses and complex sentence structures, the parents were providing their children with the opportunity to become familiar with the language of books. As Teale (1978) suggests:

> By listening to the printed word, children can develop a feel for the patterns, the flow, the nature of written language. (p. 927)

Children are born with the potential to handle the complexities of written language, but unless this potential is provided with the opportunity to grow through immersion in written language being used in its variety of forms, the cognitive structures and the logical processes needed for understanding written language will lie dormant and undeveloped. Listening to conversational language is not enough. It does not use the much more complicated structures so often found in written language. In Holdaway's (1979) opinion, the:

> Lack of experience with these encompassing structures of logical arrangements, temporal sequence, cause and effect, plot and so on, can present tremendous impediments in learning to read. (p. 54)

The parents, then, by reading to their children from a great variety of books, which contained language that was frequently rich and diverse, were providing them with this experience so essential to their development as readers.

By encouraging the children to participate in the reading, by completing sentences or by fitting in words omitted, the parents were again providing them with an extremely important strategy used in reading. Smith (1978), in discussing the ways that efficient readers identify unknown words points out that, although teachers give guessing a bad name because they see it as being "synonymous with a reckless lack of thought," this in fact, is the strategy that most proficient readers use. Smith, on the other hand, equates guessing with the fundamental process of prediction which he defines as "the use of prior knowledge (non-visual information) to eliminate unlikely alternatives." And he goes on to state that:

> Guessing in the way I have described it is not just a preferred strategy for beginning and fluent readers alike; it is the most efficient manner in which to read and learn to read. (p. 67)

These parents, by encouraging their children to "guess" at the unsaid words, were providing them with the opportunity to begin to use and become proficient with one of the most powerful strategies for word-solving that they will ever use while reading. And to do this in a situation where success was almost always assured.

Finally, in the way that the parents asked and answered questions during the reading, and by the way they read many stories without interruption, they were providing their children with the opportunity to view the experience as a meaning oriented one rather than an accurate word identification one. The children were allowed to feel, to imagine, to have their thoughts clarified or stimulated, and to develop a sense of story, all of which would provide them with an extremely sound foundation for their continuing reading development.

Repeatedly Read Stories

When children are read a story, it seems that an almost universal request made by them is for the reader to "Read it again." All the children in this study commonly asked for favourite stories to be reread, and discussions with numerous parents of preschool children outside of this study have revealed that they have constantly received similar requests. It appears that, given the opportunity, young children are able to sit and listen to the same story, for almost as many times as the reader is prepared to read it. Rather surprisingly this behaviour has received very little attention from those interested in how children learn to read. Holdaway (1979) is critical of this situation. He states:

> Even in professional circles people have joked tolerantly about the tiresome demand of infants to have their favourite books read again and again, and seemed to put this down to the

> quaintness of early childhood. As Holt (1975, pp. 85-92) and others have pointed out, as soon as we regard youngsters as being 'cute' we become incapable of perceiving their behaviour accurately or taking its significance with due seriousness. (p. 39)

The Attitudes of the Parents Towards Repeated Reading

Previous sections of this report contain the reactions of parents towards being asked by their children to read the same story over and over again. It was noted that the parents of Gillian and Jennifer and the father of Kaaren and Sean did not object to it in any way, but that it drove the mother of Kaaren and Sean "bananas." Despite her vigorous dislike of the task however, she did report having done it in the past with Sean in particular, because for a period he was interested only in two specific books. During the course of the study it was noticeable that she succumbed, with increasing frequency, to the children's pressure to read some stories again and again and this fact was revealed also in her daily entries in The Reading Log of what she had read to the children.

An interesting aspect of the repeated reading of certain stories was that it did not necessarily occur at the request of the children. When a family has their first child, usually they do not have many books and of necessity, the same books have to be read many times. Gillian's mother commented for example, that then Gillian was very little, she did not go to the library to get books and so:

> They had the same books read to them over and over again. Whereas now we go to the library and get a new set of books every two weeks. She doesn't have the same repetition as she used to have.

So repeated readings may be a product of the availability of books as well as originating from the children's requests.

Characteristics of the Books Selected for Repeated Readings

The most common features of the books chosen by the children for repeated reading were that they contained language that was usually very predictable. Rhodes (1977) defines this quality in terms of a story's semantic and syntactic predictability. If a child can predict what the author is going to say, the story is semantically predictable. If a child can predict how she/he is going to say it, the story is syntactically predictable. Rhodes goes on to say that:

> The better a child can predict the content and the language of a story, the more predictable the story is. Predictability factors, therefore, reside in both the author and the reader. (p. 198)

All the parents commented on the fact that the books that became the children's most favoured ones had "rhyming and repetitive line" characteristics. One of the best, among a great number of examples is Sutton's, My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes, which was given to all the children involved in the study and almost immediately became a favourite and was able to be retrived through reading-like behaviour after only a few readings. Its pattern of language was as follows:

The cat from France
Likes to sing and dance.

But my cat likes to hide in boxes.

The cat from Spain
Flies an aeroplane.
The cat from France
Likes to sing and dance.

But my cat likes to hide in boxes.

The cat from Norway
Got stuck in a doorway.
The cat from Spain
...
The cat from France
...

But ...

Not only was the language and content of this story highly predictable and cumulative, but the illustrations supported each new page clearly, with the cat hiding in different kinds of boxes each time.

Some of the titles of highly predictable books have already been referred to in previous sections of this chapter and some of the others the parents gave that were favourite books were: Seuss' Green Eggs and Ham; He Bear, She Bear, and One Fish, Two Fish; Galdone's The Three Bears; Carle's The Very Hungry Caterpillar and Blair's Three Billy Goats Gruff.

But not all books that were selected by the children for repeated readings contained highly predictable language.

It seemed as though almost any book could become a favourite, provided it was read often enough. The 55 books from the Disney Book Club that were in Gillian's and Gregory's library contained very little language of this kind, yet the parents reported that Gregory used to be able to 'read' every one of these, not long after they had arrived in the house. Gillian, also could 'read' most of these books after listening to them repeatedly. The father in commenting on the children's ability to do this remarked:

> We were surprised at the memory capacity of young children. You know, to be able to spin off book after book after book from memory and virtually correct. You know - very few mistakes!

Reference has already been made in a previous section of this chapter to Gillian's ability to 'read' her personalized book, Bambi, Thumper and Me, the opening sentence of which read:

> Gillian and Gregory, disguised as two fireflies from an earlier dream adventure, flew through the purple cloud in the doorway of Fantasy Land Forest.

It can be seen that this language could scarcely be described as highly predictable. The mother reported however, that after this book was received by Gillian, she requested that it be read again and again, and within an amazingly short time could 'read' it with a remarkable degree of accuracy. This investigator experienced her ability to do this when, one Sunday morning during one of his visits to the family, Gillian and Gregory came down to his room (which was the children's playroom also) at 7:00 a.m. and while Gregory played with his toys Gillian climbed into bed and 'read' this book through twice with great pleasure and ease.

Books that had unusual features, such as 'pop-up' characters, buildings or other moving parts were reported as having a strong attraction for the children. Sean's parents found that he made Nicol and Pienkowski's Meg on the Moon a favourite. It appeared that he was fascinated by the words that were highlighted in the illustrations and would 'read' and point to these at the appropriate time. Illustrations such as those in Mercer Meyer's Just For You, that contain tiny repetitive features like the spider and the grasshopper that are 'hidden' somewhere in every illustration, also caused a book to become a favourite.

Jennifer, as well as having a liking for books with highly predictable language, seemed to form a strong attachment for other books such as Beatrix Potter's Benjamin Bunny, simply because she liked the story. Around Christmas time, she also liked having some of her Christmas stories read repeatedly. Kaaren, towards the end of the visits, developed a great liking for a story about a young girl who had to start to wear spectacles. It tells of how she initially was ridiculed by her peers, and how she eventually overcame this problem and became successful and popular. Her liking for the story seems almost certainly to have originated through her identifying with the main character, since she knew there was a possibility that she may have to wear glasses in the future.

It can be seen then, that although books with highly predictable language, stood a strong chance of becoming repeatedly read favourites with young children, other factors also influences their choices. One of these was the ready availability of a book and the frequency with which it had been read, while unusual features, interesting illustrations and highlighted words also caused books to be asked for over and over again. The story itself and its theme were criteria that seemed to exert a predominate influence on some children and just like the repeated singing of Christmas carols, seasonal stories were read and reread at the appropriate time.

The Development of Reading-Like Behaviour

All the children involved in this study engaged in reading-like behaviour to a greater or lesser extent. Gillian for example, could 'read' almost all the books in her home library frequently with a high degree of accuracy. However, the degree of accuracy of her reading depended on the recency and frequency with which the story had been read. Jennifer had a number of books that were favourites which she could 'read' with varying degrees of accuracy and a great many more that she could paraphrase by looking at the pictures. In these circumstances, the words she used did not always resemble those that were on the page in terms of their order, but the action, plot and theme were almost always reported very accurately. Kaaren and Sean however engaged in very little reading-like behaviour, although as the study progressed they did so more and more. This may have been due to the mother becoming more flexible in the matter of book selection and allowing the children to more frequently select favourite books for rereading.

In Gillian's case, her mother reported that reading-like behaviour first started to appear in noticeable form between her first and second birthday while her nursery rhymes were being read to her. She was between two and two and one half years old, when she became very attached to and interested in Clarke's The Three Little Kittens and asked for it to be read over and over again. The mother commented:

> I don't know why she - that just became her favourite book and she asked to have it read every time we sat down to read. She'd bring up The Three Little Kittens and that had to be one of the stories during the reading.

When asked how they thought Gillian went about learning to 'read' a story or when it became evident that she had started to do this, the parents were not able to be very specific, and for interesting reasons. The father commented:

> It's hard to tell. How do you know when a child tries to memorize? She'd listen. Then all of a sudden she would repeat the whole thing, or repeat large passages of it. She always paid very careful attention when you read it. I guess she was absorbing the story.

Both parents commented on Gillian's attentiveness during any story reading and how she would immediately correct them if they missed out any word or replaced one with another. The fact that she could do this indicated that she must have been covertly 'following along' constantly without overtly participating in the reading. The influence of the older sibling on the participation by the younger one in the story reading then became very clear in this family. When asked as to when Gillian first demonstrated her ability to engage in reading-like behaviour the father observed that:

> It is difficult to pin point with Gillian because Greg was always around until he started going to school. It was difficult to get him to be quiet and let Gillian recount the stories. ... He would sort of demand or demonstrate that he knew this story or whatever. Gillian always played a more passive role in that context ...

Later when being asked about the children's and the parents' questioning behaviours during story reading the father noted that he had to exercise some control over this:

> ... sometimes I've cut her off, because it becomes - it's difficult to talk about Gillian along because Greg is on the other side and she starts interjecting, he gets angry about it and sometimes the scene can get a little out of hand so I just gently carry on with the story.

The control that the older sibling exercised over the participation of the younger one was very evident in all three families as the study progressed. The behaviour commented on by the father was witnessed on a number of occasions and some of the transcripts which demonstrate this will be reported and discussed in Chapter VI . It was also witnessed dramatically in the case of Sean and Kaaren on one particular occasion, when Kaaren went into a tantrum and finally stormed out of the room, because the father was going to let Sean 'read' one of their favourite stories before she did.

In the case of Jennifer and Christopher the control of the story reading situation by the older child was not as explicit but it was there constantly, whenever Christopher chose, or was able to join the shared book experience situation. Because Jennifer was far more familiar with the stories being read than was Christopher, she was constantly first to put in the word or words when the parent paused in his/her reading. She was also the one who usually was able to not only answer the questions asked by the parent, but was first to ask any questions as well. Christopher became, by her quickness, almost totally unable to participate actively in any reading when Jennifer was present. She did not have to try and prevent his participation deliberately.

When asked when reading-like behaviour first appeared with Kaaren, the mother was definite in her reply:

> Kaaren was a year and a half. She would look at
> the picture and would only say the sentence
> that was on the page.

She knew that was when it appeared because that was when they started living at her mother's. Reference has already been made to the grandmother reading to Kaaren frequently using the same books, and encouraging her to participate in the reading. The mother reported that she now 'reads' to herself and Sean on occasions and believes that she can actually read the stories:

> She reads on the couch, little stories - My Friend and The Garbage Man. Whenever I sit down and read those to her she says "I can read those books Mom."

The father also commented on her reading-like behaviour:

> Once when she was reading a book with large print from memory, I thought she was actually reading the words as she did it verbatim. But over time she has forgotten it.

Another example of the older siblings' influence over the younger one was provided when the mother commented on Kaaren's 'reading' to Sean. She remarked that:

> Kaaren has been reading to Sean for quite some time. Sean has started reading to himself, but won't read to Kaaren, probably because she won't let him.

The father confirmed her judgement by observing that:

> She would say, "No, I'll read. I'm the oldest."

With Jennifer, reading-like behaviour seems to have appeared when she was around eighteen months old and it began with nursery rhymes as the mother reported:

> She would say the nursery rhymes she liked - Humpty Dumpty and Little Boy Blue. There wasn't much repetition as we kept reading new books.

Although Jennifer would 'fill in words or tell the story' with a number of stories, with The Tale of Benjamin Bunny she would just sit and listen, dsspite the fact that she had heard it many many times. She would however, correct the mother or father if they miscued during the reading of this story, which indicated that she, like Gillian, was following along covertly, but for a different reason partly, than Gillian.

Jennifer obviously engaged in independent reading-like behaviour quite frequently. The mother explained that:

> Green Eggs and Ham she likes to read a lot ... She often reads this one to her dolls. Lots of times she will get up after she has been put to bed and she will get a few books and in the morning we'll find them in her bed.

She not only 'reads' to her dolls, but will, as her mother noted, on occasions 'read' indirectly to her, through Christopher:

> Sometimes she likes to read to me. She says she is reading to Chris, but she is really reading to me. She stays with the story but probably reads from the pictures.

Jennifer appeared at this stage to be developing an awareness of the fact that there are words on the pages of a book and that these are what you have to read. Her father reported that she had recently started to ask them if they knew all the words in a certain book that they were reading to themselves and the mother had seen her pointing to the words in a book that she was 'reading' to her teddy. Since Christopher would be unlikely to know that she was not reading the words, to her way of thinking, it would be much safer to 'read' to him than to her mother.

The parents reported that the children seemed to use a variety of intuitively based techniques to gain mastery over some of all of their favourite books. All the parents stimulated the children to participate in the story reading by using an oral cloze technique on words, phrases, and eventually longer sections of discourse that they were confident that the children could produce from memory. Sometimes they miscued on certain words, deliberately or otherwise, and were almost invariably immediately corrected by the children.

In the case of Gillian and Sean, it was obvious that they were participating covertly in the reading because of the attitudes of their older siblings to their participating overtly. Gillian's mother had noted however, that now Gregory was at school and she was able to read to Gillian on her own, the reading-like behaviour was appearing much more at the overt level, even to the extent of Gillian telling her mother that she (Gillian) "would read now." The covert reading along that the children appeared to engage in would on occasions reach the surface in a kind of 'mumble reading' where they 'read' the parts they could, starting the words fractionally behind the reader and saying them in a subdued mumble.

Another technique that appeared to be used at times was reported by Jennifer's mother. This involved the mother reading a phrase or a sentence and Jennifer 'echo read' it, that is she repeated the same words immediately afterwards, using the same intonation patterns as the mother. Gillian had also used this technique with this investigator, during the collecting of data for the pilot study. She instructed the investigator to stop reading so that she would read and proceeded to echo read what he had just said. The fact that this behaviour did not reappear again until the second last visit made to her home, will be discussed in Chapter VI.

Reading-like behaviour seems to have appeared early in each child's life through being read nursery rhymes and favourite stories, (or stories that became favourites) on a repeated basis. The predictable nature of the material being read, almost certainly facilitated its development. The amount and frequency of its overt use by the children and the time at which it first appeared, seems to have been markedly influenced by the child's position in the family. Older siblings contrived, in various ways, to prevent the younger ones from participating in the reading either by giving them 'orders' to stop it, or by being quicker to produce the section of the story being omitted by the parent. But their actions, while possibly slowing down its development, could not prevent it from becoming part of their brother's or sister's reading activity.

The significance of the young child 'playing at being a reader' has been seriously neglected by those who have sought to determine how young children go about the task of becoming literate. This intrinsically motivated activity, which resulted in these young children gaining a form of independent control over their most loved stories, provided them with the opportunity to engage in as much self-directed 'reading' activity as they wished, free from the intervention of the adults around them. But just as in learning oral language, they could go back to these same adults for further immersion and/or testing of their own growing mastery of the process. Chapter VI of this report will examine and discuss this highly significant aspect of emergent reading behaviour in depth, through the transcriptions of the children engaged in the process of using it.

Attitudes of the Parents to Reading-Like Behaviour

The reactions of the parents to the appearance of reading-like behaviour in their children was positive in every case except for Kaaren's and Sean's mother who, found it "aggravating" when it first started with Kaaren. This attitude did not seem to persist however, as during the course of the study, she was observed on a number of occasions actually facilitating its development in the children. None of the parents actively directed any effort to have the stories deliberately memorized by the children. They seemed to see the participating on the part of the children as a means of enhancing the story time experience for all who were involved in it, as evidenced by Gillian's father's remarks:

> I felt that it was an indication of what that kind of experience meant to them. To be able to repeat it back. Not from just simply being forced to recall the story. It was never ever [Mother: Never!] pushed that way ever. But the delight that they get from telling you what the story is. Yeah, sure. I enjoy that.

Gillian's mother however, saw the behaviour in the way that Holdaway (1979, p. 39) describes how many parents tend to view it. In answer to a question asking her how she had reacted to the children's reading-like behaviour she replied:

> Oh, I thought it was cute! In fact it amazed me how many stories they could memorize.

In commenting on a question asking the parents if they ever praised the children for their reading-like behaviour, Gillian's father again referred to the way in which it enhanced the story reading experience, by stating:

> Yes! We were delighted you know. She showed that she remembered that much of the story, and obviously, not so much because she's achieved something, but because she did something she was really enjoying doing. And doing it so that we could hear it.

Kaaren's and Sean's father also referred to the enjoyment he obtained from having the children participate when he read to them. He noted that:

> My favourite game is stopping before the sentence ends and getting them to fill in the blank.

Jennifer's parents, too, looked on her reading-like behaviour in a positive light but did not think that they took any steps to encourage it. The mother, in reply to a question asking her if she ever praised her for engaging in reading-like behaviour, replied:

> No. If she reads me a story I play along with her and ask her questions about the story - but not really praise her. I give her encouragement if she says she is going to read a story.

She also thought that it had its occupational uses as can be seen by this remark:

> If I'm busy she will get her books and read to her dolls, or when she goes to bed, or early in the morning.

Although some of them expressed surprise at the number of stories their children seemed to be able to memorize, none of them appeared to be concerned by the fact that much of the children's 'reading' of the stories was at times, less than accurate as far as the words on the page were concerned. They were impressed by the children's ability to retell a story, even after hearing it once or twice. When discussing whether Gillian deliberately attempted to memorize a story her father commented that:

> She knows the story. She knows the content (his emphasis) of the story. Almost any story ... sometimes when a new books comes for example, and R. (her mother) has read it to her and she shows it to me the first time, she tells me the story.

He went on to relate how, on occasions, when driving her home from kindergarten, she would retell a story to him, a story that has been read to her that afternoon.

Jennifer's mother also commented on her ability to retell stories by stating that:

> She can relate the story read at nursery school in every detail.

The father saw the process of learning a new story more as a type of absorption. He observed that:

> I don't think she really tries to memorize the stories. It's more of an osmosis.

From these observations of their children's ability to retell stories that they have heard on just a few occasions it becomes apparent that the parents were witnessing another important element in the development of their children's emergent reading development. By constantly listening to stories read to them, these children appear to have been able to develop a "story grammar" referred to for example, by Thorndike (1977) and Mandler and Johnson (1977). Through building their schema for stories, they experience little or no difficulty in comprehending these stories, and therefore remembering them, as Guthrie (1977) suggests. Coupled with this, was their ability to develop control over the patterns of written language and to use this to reproduce their stories.

Reading-like behaviour then, whether it was expressed by an accurate 'reading' of the story, or by a paraphrased retelling, was seen by the parents in a positive way. The major outcome they saw was in its contribution to the shared nature of the experience, and the opportunity it provided for the children to become more involved in the activity. It was not seen as a means whereby their children might be able to set about the task of becoming literate through their own self-directed activity with books. It was interesting to them and it tended to be encouraged by them, but for one of them at least, it remained in the realm of being "cute."

Environmental Language

This study was concerned primarily with examining the development of preschool children's emergent reading behaviour in book experience situations. Any study of children's reading development however, must focus its attention on the children's growing familiarity with the function and the form of written language. Since the children of the developed countries at least, grow up in an environment that is littered with written language being used functionally in a variety of ways, the influence of this language on the growing child's linguistic awareness and competence has got to be considered when examining the factors and processes involved in their reading development. The influences of the language of the roadway, the supermarket, television commercials, food dispensers and gas stations, for example, should all be examined. In this study the examination was brief, sufficient only to acknowledge the importance of environmental language for emergent literacy.

The parents of the children in this study had taken few specific steps to make their children aware of the language of the environment. They had all however, provided the children with their own form of environmental language in the home, by putting multi-coloured magnetic letters on their refrigerator doors. These were made use of in a variety of ways, but primarily for the children to compose words that became significant to them from time to time. Words such as their own names, other members of the family's names including those of their pets, words from books that had caught their attention, and some words from the world of advertising, such as Coca Cola and Pepsi or a current breakfast cereal's brand name.

Gillian's father reported that since he had started driving her home from kindergarten, she had commenced asking him what some signs said and/or meant. He referred to having to explain to her what the various speed limit signs meant in the city and a one way street sign for example. The mother mentioned that Gillian would help her find packets on the shelves in the supermarket. From a very early age the children had accompanied her shopping and from when they were approximately two years old, "began spotting things on the shelves and naming them." This process of identification appears to have originated with television commercials, but the mother was not sure what cues the children were using to identify the appropriate packets, since colour, shape, pictures and language are all significant features. Kaaren's and Sean's parents had not taken particular notice of their children's knowledge of the language of the environment except that they were aware that both of them knew when they passed McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken or A and W Root Beer signs. They always recognized a 'Stop' sign, but they were not sure whether the children were using the contextualised settings or the words to recognize all of these.

Jennifer was also able to recognize environmental language in various forms as her mother observed:

> She can recognize 'Stop' signs, McDonalds, Burger King, etcetera. We had Kentucky Fried for lunch the other day and she carried the napkin around for two days and would point and say "Kentucky Fried Chicken" and something about "The Colonel makes it" and then, "It's finger lickin' good."

She also helped her mother with shopping by getting the items off the shelf for her, but the mother was certain that she used the colour of the label, rather than the words.

It can be seen then that environmental language in its various forms was playing a part in these children's growing print awareness. The children's ability to recognize commercial and roadway environmental language however, had not been verified from the parents, since unless they had asked the children how they knew what each logo represented, they could not be sure that the children were using the print, rather than the contextualised setting to recognize the sign.

Learning to Write

Holdaway (1979), in discussing the work of Carol Chomsky (1971) and Charles Read (1970), in relation to his own observations of the reading development of young children makes the point that:

> ... in terms of preschool behaviour it is clear that the incidence of writing-like behaviour complements reading-like behaviour and displays the same characteristics of personal initiative and approximation. (p. 48)

Of the three girls involved in the study, Kaaren appeared to be the one who was most interested in developing her writing ability and it seemed as if she was more interested in learning to write than in learning to read. The mother reported, for example that:

> Kaaren was printing before she went to school. [Church school at 3 years of age] She wasn't printing her name but she was trying to print.

She learned to print her own name soon after starting church school and since that time had continued to extend her skill.

The most significant factor in Kaaren's early interest in learning to write however, appeared to be the correspondence that was occurring regularly between her mother and her grandmother. Kaaren had adopted the practice of 'writing a letter' almost every day and these were sent occasionally to the grandmother. The mother described what happened in this respect as follows:

> She sometimes draws pictures and then puts a few x's and o's at the bottom and her name. Sometimes she does, you know, just wavy lines as D. [the father] indicated and signs her name. She always prints it at the bottom. Sometimes I wrote things, little things to her Granny because I think Granny must get tired of pictures and scribbles. I try and get Kaaren to copy them, so we had: Dear Granny, I miss you. Love, Kaaren.

Kaaren, who by this stage was adept at printing all the letters of the alphabet, would then copy what her mother had written and it would be sent off with her mother's letter.

Kaaren appeared to spend a considerable amount of time, almost every day in filling pages with letters, numbers, words, or sentences copied from books. Most of the letters were made using the upper case forms, but she was beginning to use lower case letters also. She had developed great confidence in her printing, and at the time of the initial interview with the parents, she had just taught herself to print 'STOP' by copying it from a Department of Highway's manual, and had recently mastered 'SEAN,' 'MUM' and 'DAD'.

In an interview conducted with the live-in baby sitter towards the end of the visits when Kaaren was 4 years 9 months old, the baby sitter was asked if Kaaren ever requested that she read to her, to which she replied:

> No. She used to but doesn't anymore. She's more into writing letters and drawing pictures. She does a lot of that on her own. If she needs help with a words she wants to write, she asks me. Sometimes I just spell it for her.

When asked if that happened every day she replied:

> She is pretty regular about printing. Kaaren is into writing words over and over again. When she learns a new word, she keeps writing it over and over.

The provision of a small writing desk and chair, the ready availability of plenty of writing materials, the assistance of the live-in baby sitter and the constantly positive reactions and interest of her parents, appear to have been some of the external factors at least that set up the conditions of Kaaren's continuing efforts to master the process of writing. The regular sending and receiving letters from the grandmother could have provided a necessary stimulus and purpose for her activity in this area of her literacy development. Most importantly however, the parents did not place any great demands on her to produce coherent written language. They did however, make it clear usually, that words had a correct and an incorrect spelling, but she was praised for whatever she produced.

Although Gillian engaged in writing activity, she did not do so with the same apparent intensity as Kaaren. Whereas she always had a plentiful supply of books readily available, and places to 'read' them, she did not have the same conditions operating for her writing development. She did not, for example, have a personal writing desk like Kaaren, and paper, pencils and crayons were not immediately available to her. Another factor that may have prevented her from engaging in a great deal of self-directed writing activity was her apparent belief that any words she wrote had to be spelled correctly. She could not engage in any writing activity unless her mother was there to assist her with spelling. Not that the parents insisted on correct spelling, but it seemed that they may have, in various ways, established an expectation for this in Gillian's thinking. She would happily engage in writing activity for long periods of time, but she always had to have an adult in her vicinity to help her, since the writing she was producing was to be read by someone else. It was usually in the form of a letter, a thank you note, or a card of some kind. She had recently written a letter with her mother's help, to a little boy who had been a friend when the family had lived in Alberta.

The conditions for Jennifer to engage in any writing activity were similar to Gillian's. There was positive encouragement on the part of the parents, and materials were always available after a search, but she did not have a permanent place where she could sit down and write when she wanted to. She could identify all the upper and lower case letter forms and used to play a great deal with the magnetic letters on the refrigerator door, constantly asking which letter was which. Her parents reported also that she regularly made upper case letters using the cutlery on the table and asking the parents to guess what letters she had formed. Her mother, in commenting on her attitude to producing writing explained that:

> She can write her name and 'Christopher' and is very fussy with the shapes of the letters - will erase them if they are not good enough.

Although Jennifer engaged in writing activity frequently, most of it was directed at practicing producing letter shapes. Like Gillian, it appeared that she felt that she could not produce more than that in self-directed activity, because of the need to spell the words correctly.

The most significant experience that Jennifer seemed to have with written language being used functionally, was in relation to her library card for the books that her father brought home from the school almost on a daily basis. The mother reported that:

> . She has to put her name in the card. If her name isn't on the card she is quite upset. She can look at a library card and recognize if her name is there or not.

The father described how she could always tell him if he brought a book home that they had had on a previous occasion and, apart from being able to describe what the story was about, would quickly find her name on the card in the book to prove her point.

Sean was the only child in the study who, at the beginning of the visits, had not displayed any interest in writing behaviour, nor had he begun to identify letters by their name. Part of this lack of interest may have originated with the lack of opportunity. The small writing desk was considered to be Kaaren's and he seldom was able to use it. Coupled with that, unlike Kaaren, he had never had any need to learn how to write. When she went to her church school, she had to learn to put her name on the pictures she had drawn each day, and to identify her name amongst a lot of others on her coat peg at the school. These simple requirements seemed to spark an interest that had already begun to develop in Kaaren. Apart from these features, the constant sight of his sister engaging in an activity regularly that he did not really understand, may have dissuaded him from trying because of the possibility of failure existing in his mind. Whereas with Kaaren at around 3 years of age, the mother and the current baby sitter at that time had given her specific assistance in learning the letter names, to print the letters and eventually her own name.

It can be seen then, that a variety of factors appear to operate in the home which influence the development of writing-like and writing behaviour. The fact that writing can serve a communicative function in the form of personal letters and the like, and a source of information, as in the case of a child's name, can provide a child with the needed purpose to begin to experiment with producing it. An 'experimental atmosphere' that is child-centered rather than adult-centered appears to be an important condition, so that the child feels free to engage in a process of trial and error, just as in learning oral language. Interest, praise and frequent demonstrations of the process in operation on the part of the parents seem to help, and the provision of a 'place of your own' to write, with the necessary materials being readily available, all appear to supply the opportunity for the child to begin to experiment with producing written language.

The nature of the relationship between reading and writing at the preschool stage, has only recently begun to receive attention, (Bissex, 1979; Chomsky, 1971; Clay, 1975, 1977; Gillooly, 1973; Goodman, Kenneth and Yetta, 1978; Goodman, 1980; Read, 1975), but the evidence points strongly to the development of the two behaviours of reading and writing being intrinsically mutually supportive. Clay (1977) in a recent monograph, "Write Now Read Later: An Evaluation" offers a suggestion as to why learning to write may be necessary for learning to read. She concludes:

> Perhaps the challenge is this. How can we get young children to want to hear sound segments in words and to search for these on their initiative? That is worth thinking about. And why is it easier to go from sound to print than vice versa? That is a question worthy of an answer. (p. 13)

Television

All the parents involved in this study exercised some control over the children's viewing of television. If they thought the programme was "not suitable" the children were not permitted to view it. None of the parents viewed any programmes on a regular basis with their children, but they did sit with them on occasions. The amount of viewing engaged in by the children ranged from very little in the case of Kaaren and Sean, through Jennifer who averaged approximately half an hour to one hour a day, to Gillian. Her parents reported that she probably watched between two and two and one half hours daily, especially during the winter months.

The most popular programmes appeared to be Sesame Street, Mr. Dress-up, Disney World and, in Gillian's case, The Six

Million Dollar Man. Advertisements were very popular however, and Gillian's mother for example claimed that:

> They [Gregory and Gillian] know every commercial I'm sure that was ever played on television.

The father pointed out that the children would be playing while the television was on and making a lot of noise but as soon as a commercial came on the screen, they would stop and watch the commercials intently and then return to their play. This interest in commercials was also reported by Kaaren's and Sean's and Jennifer's parents.

None of the parents reported any carry over from television viewing influencing an interest in books, although Jennifer's mother reported that she would retell to her on occasions, the story that had been read by Mr. Dress-up. She also thought that watching television improved Jennifer's vocabulary but did not think that she learned anything more than letter names from Sesame Street. Commercials had their influence through the children recognizing various goods advertised in the supermarkets and so being able to assist their mothers with the grocery shopping, and Gillian, as has been mentioned earlier in the chapter, pressured her grandfather into buying a book she had seen advertised on television. Gillian had watched Sesame Street regularly since she was four years old but her mother noted that:

> She does not appear to learn the kinds of things about the sounds of letters that Sesame Street tries to teach. She does not seem to be able to relate this to words.

And in another interview towards the end of the observational visits, she observed that:

> She's been watching Sesame Street for years and doesn't appear to pick it up. (Building words by "sounding out") I couldn't get her to make the connection. I think she watched it for entertainment value.

Television appears to have played a minor role in the reading development of these children and did not seem to detract from the amount of time they spent with books to any great extent. The comments made by Gillian's mother concerning her learning from Sesame Street was confirmed when the investigator viewed the programme with Gillian on one occasion. From questioning her during and after the programme it was obvious that she was viewing it for entertainment purposes and not only could she not "make the connection" between the sounds and the letters, she was not interested in trying to do so. A similar result was obtained when a programme was viewed with Kaaren and Sean.

The major value of watching a programme such as Sesame Street appeared to come when Jennifer and Kaaren and Sean received copies of the magazine published under the same name. The parents reported that the children spent a great deal of time looking at them, and doing the various activities suggested.

Since the influence of television seemed rather slight on the children's reading development it will not be commented on again in this report.

Summary

The data reported in this chapter demonstrated clearly, the range of factors which were operating to influence the reading development of these preschool children. Another feature of the data was that a number of seemingly innocuous conditions which were present in the children's experiences with books and reading, were seen to be having a significant effect on their emergent reading behaviour.

The parents' own book experiences as children were seen to have a possible effect on the nature and extent of the book experiences that they were providing for their own children. Those parents who could remember the pleasure they experienced at being read to regularly as children and who had developed subsequently, a deep and abiding love of books themselves, were seen to bring a rather different set of attitudes and actions to the shared book ~~experiences~~ experience in the home, when compared with those parents who did not have those experiences as children. They started reading to their children much earlier in their lives, they read more frequently and for longer periods of time, and they indicated clearly that they thoroughly enjoyed sharing books with their children. They even provided a greater range of books in their homes, both in the form of home libraries and through books being brought into the home from outside libraries.

The parents of Sean and Kaaren however, who do not seem to have come from book oriented homes, (which was certainly the case with respect to the mother) provided a different climate for books and reading. They started reading to their children much later in the children's lives, they rather rigorously controlled the frequency and duration of the reading that they did with the children, and they looked on the task as a "duty" and as a means of "settling the children down before they went to bed." Their attitude seemed to be, as the mother expressed it, rather "mechanistic" and there was not the same sense of pleasure and mutual sharing present in the shared book experience in that particular home.

None of the parents involved in the study, were opposed to their children learning to read before going to school, but they did not seem to want to teach their children to read. All except one of them seemed to hold the view that learning to read was a rather formal affair, and that what was happening to their children during their preschool years was providing them with a preparation for the instruction that they would receive once they reached school age. They did not see the book experiences that they were providing their children with as a means through which, they could learn to read. This was despite the fact that in the case of one of the families, their eldest child had almost certainly learned to read primarily through being immersed in books on regular occasions from the age of two months. Reading to their children was seen in the light of being a "good thing" to do.

All the children involved in the study were seen to have developed positive attitudes towards books and reading and would happily listen to stories being read to them for long periods of time. The two children who were read to from very early in their lives, who were read to much more frequently and for longer periods of time, and who had parents who conveyed a feeling of joyful sharing in book experience situation with their children, were seen to have developed much more powerful attitudes towards books and reading, than the two children whose reading experience started later in their lives and whose parents were not so book oriented. These children seemed to have shorter attention spans and to spend much less time in independent play with their books, than the two children who came from the more strongly book oriented homes.

The range and quality of books provided in each of the homes was varied. Jennifer had an extensive library containing a great number of excellent children's books written by reputable authors. She also had the benefit of books being brought into the home on a regular basis from her father's school library. Gillian's library was also extensive, but the quality of the books in it was of a lower level than that in Jennifer's. The large number of Disney books with their popular themes but with less than memorable language made up a substantial part of her library. She did however, have a regular and large supply of mostly excellent books coming in from the town library. Kaaren's and Sean's home library was much more limited than those of the other two children and while they had some very good titles in their collection, many of them were seen to be of the "supermarket" type. Only one parent was seen to make specific use of author's names when selecting books to buy for their children.

The homes of each of the children received a copy of a children's magazine regularly and the arrival of these was eagerly awaited by the children. They all had a supply of long playing story records with accompanying books which were used regularly by all the children except Jennifer, who apparently did not listen to hers often.

The importance of the personal ownership of books was not always recognized by the parents. Two of the families tried to impose a sharing philosophy on the children but the children could always readily identify their own books. In Jennifer's home, she was able to exercise ownership over most of the books in the house and even had some specific books her brother was not permitted to touch. This virtual exclusion of her younger brother from the personal ownership of many books, may have been one of the reasons for his lack of interest in and attitude towards books and reading.

One of the seemingly insignificant factors which may have affected the frequency of stories being read on an impromptu basis was whether or not a collection of books were readily available in the family living room. Kaaren and Sean were seldom read to on this basis and their books always had to be kept neatly stacked on the shelves in Sean's bedroom. They always had to put their books away immediately after they were finished with them. In the case of Gillian and Jennifer however, there was always a pile of books readily available in the family living room and they were used frequently on an impromptu basis for reading to these children.

All the parents reported holding the book so that their children could see the pages of the stories clearly. All but one of them engaged in pointing to the print from time to time with the probable outcome of the children gradually developing their understanding of the directionality conventions of print and of contributing to their growing awareness of the presence of print on the pages. The pace at which the parents read the stories and the way they paused at predictable points all seemed to be providing the children with an opportunity to share in the reading actively. The parents also usually provided excellent models of oral reading which the children could subsequently emulate. This quality of expressive reading seemed to add to the enjoyment of the experience on the part of both the parents and the children and almost certainly contributed to the children developing more positive attitudes towards books and reading. It also probably contributed to the development of their implicit understanding and control of the intonation cueing system of written language.

Another apparently innocuous aspect of the children's experience with their books, but one that was seen potentially to have a substantial effect on their reading development, lay in the selection of the books for the story reading. With Gillian and Jennifer, the parents allowed them great freedom to choose most of the books for any shared book experience, but in the case of Kaaren and Sean, the mother tended to exercise control over this aspect of the experience. When the children were given the opportunity to make the selection, they almost invariably chose books that had become favourites through repeated readings. When the parents chose the books however, and this was especially true of the mother of Sean and Kaaren, they tended to select new or infrequently read titles for the reading, whenever possible. The repeated reading of favourite stories was seen to provide the foundations for the development of reading-like behaviour in the children which was to play an extremely important role in the development of their reading behaviour. The constant selection of new titles for the reading would not allow the children to begin to learn reading-like behaviour.

Reading-like behaviour was seen to occur in all the children involved in this study, but to a much less extent in Kaaren and Sean, than in Gillian and Jennifer, because of their irregular opportunity to hear favourite stories read and reread. It seemed that almost any book could become a favourite and the children could learn to retrieve it for themselves provided it was read to them with sufficient frequency. Given a free choice however, it was noticeable that stories which were either favourites with the children, or became favourites with them very quickly were stories that contained highly predictable language in the form of rhyme and rhythm. This language was made all the more predictable in some stories through the use of repetition and/or cumulative patterns. These stories were seen to be learned in a reading-like behaviour sense, very quickly by the children.

Most of the parents reacted favourably to their children's attempts to share in the book experience through reading-like behaviour. Only Kaaren's and Sean's mother found it "aggravating". They reported that it appeared very early in the children's lives, always in response to being read and reread some nursery rhyme or story. The parents seemed to have encouraged its development by occasionally pausing and encouraging the children to participate. They reported that the children were usually quick to correct them if they read any part of a favourite story incorrectly. This would seem to indicate that the children were engaging in a covert reading, or silent rehearsal of the story as the parent read it to them. Their reading-like behaviour apparently only became overt when the conditions were suitable.

The children were seen to use a variety of techniques in order to learn to retrieve their stories. Sometime they would "mumble" along with the parent as they read and as they became more familiar with the story they would participate by "reading", sometimes just behind the reader, sometimes keeping up with the reader, and then at highly predictable points, reading ahead of the reader. This could be described as "cooperative" reading. They also "echo" read by asking the reader to stop after a phrase or a sentence and then echoing that section. By learning to reproduce their stories in this way the children were demonstrating their abilities to "absorb" their stories, as one parent described it, and they expressed surprise at how rapidly they seemed to be able to learn to do this. By so doing they were able to gain even more control over the patterns of written language and the story schemata.

Reading-like behaviour, despite its rather obvious relationship to reading was not seen by the parents as a means by which their children might be able to learn to read. They were impressed and surprised by their children's ability to learn to reproduce their stories in this way and all but one of them enjoyed their efforts to share in the reading in this way, but as one parent put it, the behaviour was generally seen as "cute".

All the children demonstrated to their parents some knowledge of environmental language, especially in relation to television commercials, road signs and fast food outlet logos. The children seemed to be able to respond to this highly contextualized language because of its immediately functional nature. All of the children, except Sean, were making considerable progress in learning to write also, and their interest in doing this appeared to come from experiences with written language that were personal and functional for them. The provision of a suitable writing desk and parents who were prepared to encourage and support any efforts of their children at producing writing were also seen as factors which stimulated them to produce writing. By developing in their children however, an attitude of thinking that everything that they wrote had to be spelled correctly, was seen to make them dependent on having someone to help with spelling whenever they engaged in trying to write.

It can be seen that the family backgrounds and book environments of children can and do play a highly significant role in their reading development in a great variety of ways. The following chapter examines a specific area of this development in the form of the growth of the children's concepts about books, print and reading.

CHAPTER V

CONCEPTS ABOUT BOOKS, PRINT AND READING

Introduction

Perhaps the most graphic description of one of the key problems facing young children in learning to read was given by Jean Paul Sartre (1964) in his autobiography Words. While the process of learning to read may not be as simple as Sartre describes it, there is an undoubted need for children to develop an understanding, if not at the explicit level, certainly at the implicit level, that their stories are contained in the print on the pages of their books. They need to know that if a story is read today, when it is read tomorrow, the language on the pages will not change. They need to understand also, that the print follows a certain prescribed route through the book, and of course, they have to develop a high degree of eye coordination to follow that route. These directional conventions develop from the relatively simple, gross left to right eye movement across the page, to the intricate and confusing task of learning to match eye, and ear, and voice (in the early stages of learning) with the print on the page.

Again, if children are going to be taught to read, or talked to about reading, they almost certainly have to have some understanding of the language of reading instruction, or as Downing (1972) calls it "the reading register." Terms such as "word," "letter," "read" and "page" for example all have to be understood, as well as phrases such as "the first (and last) letter of the word," "the beginning (and end) of the story" and "the name (or title) of the story." Even some knowledge of the conventions of punctuation may help the young learner to go about the task of learning to read in the traditional instructional setting more easily.

But not only do children have to develop control over the directionality conventions of print as well as the language if they are being taught to read, they would also seem to have to develop an understanding of what the process of reading involves. However, whether what the children have to know about the processes involved in reading has to be at the level of explicit or conscious awareness, or whether it can remain at the implicit or tacit level of awareness has been an important issue for debate among researchers (Downing, 1979; Mattingly, 1979; Smith, 1975).

Finally, the need for children to build, at the implicit and/or explicit level, their understanding of the functions of written language, has to be examined in relation to their progress in learning to be literate. As a result of his continuing longitudinal studies of the oral language development of children, Halliday (1975) has been able to identify a system of developmentally-based language functions that young children have to master as "...necessary and sufficient conditions for the transition to the adult system (of oral language)" (p. 245).

In this chapter the data pertaining to the children's growing knowledge and understanding of the language of reading, of the conventions of print, of the process of reading, and of how they might go about learning to read, will be reported and discussed in some detail. The development of the children's awareness of the functions of written language, particularly through their experiences with environmental language and their writing behavior will also be briefly examined.

Knowledge of the Language of Reading

Any study which examines the development of children's language should take into account the findings of researchers such as Vygotsky (1962) and Piaget (1955). While children may use words in much the same way as adults, their understanding of these words may be both different and far less comprehensive. Both Piaget and Vygotsky have brought our attention to the qualitative differences between the language and thought of adults and children. As far back as 1923 for example, Piaget (1955) noted that children:

> ...can make correct use of certain difficult terms in their speech, and yet are incapable of understanding these terms taken by themselves. (p. 146)

As a result of his observations, Piaget concluded that the children's awareness of the meaning of sentences precedes their awareness of individual words.

It became obvious as this study progressed, that the children's understanding of most of the concepts they were using in relation to reading were changing, and nowhere was this more evident for example than in the word "reading" itself. Also, since all the children in this study were in the intuitive phase of Piaget's (1962) pre-operational period, they experienced difficulty in providing the investigator with reasons for what they were saying or doing. Because of this, many of the questions asked that sought explanations for certain responses, especially from the three year old children, received "I don't know" replies.

The problem of the qualitative differences between the language of the children and that of the adults, the fact that the children's understanding of the concepts involved were constantly changing, and the difficulty experienced in probing for reasons, all have to be considered when examining the data obtained. Although some of the data reported and discussed in this section were obtained from the observations of the children interacting with their books, most of them were derived from the administration of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale, which was used at different times throughout the study.

As could be expected, all children could use the word "book" correctly and could distinguish a book from a magazine, newspaper, or a comic. They all knew that what we usually did with books was read them although, as was revealed through later questioning and observations, the understanding of what we do when we read was very different from the commonly accepted meaning of the word. Sean (3;3), Jennifer (3;8) and Kaaren (4;7) all indicated that they could use the word "writing" correctly to describe that behaviour and Gillian at 4 years 6 months, during the pilot study period, had informed the investigator that she could write her own name, and then proceeded to do so.

The responses to the question as to what was usually inside a book were varied, and sometimes concrete examples had to be given to the children in order to obtain a response. Sean at 3 years 3 months was unable to respond to the question, but when asked at 3 years 4 months (during the reading of one of his favorite stories Sutton's My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes) how he knew what to say when we read a story he replied "There's words down this page (pointing). That's how we know." Then at 3 years 5 months, when asked what the investigator was reading in a book, he replied, "A story", and in response to "How do I know what to read?" he stated, "'Cos there's words."

When Jennifer (3;8) was asked the same question she replied immediately with "Pictures." Then, as if to reinforce this response, when asked to show the investigator where to start reading in the book being used, did so by opening the book to the correct pages which had both print and a picture on them. She then turned back to the two preceding pages which were blank and carried out the following dialogue with the investigator:

J: "No. We do not start here." (Points to the blank pages).

I: How do you know we don't start here?

J: We don't - There's some white paper. (Points again).

I: Why don't we start here on that page?

J: No-o!

I: Why?

J: Because we can't see the pictures.

Despite her obvious commitment to the pictures for reading, when asked later to show the investigator exactly where to start reading, she pointed to the words, going from left to right across the top line of print on the first page.

Kaaren (4;7), like Jennifer responded to the question with "Pictures", but later in the same interview stated that "Letters have to be on the page before you can read." A month later in response to a question concerning what she saw in a book that told her what to say, she pointed to the words on a page of a book that she was 'reading', and said "Words." Immediately after this however, she described in detail, how she had gone back through the book (My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes) to find out from the pictures, what to 'read' on the succeeding pages which repeated in cyclic form, what had been introduced previously. Her comments were as follows:

K: I went backwards.

I: And what did you look at?

K: Pictures.

I: At the pictures.

K: Yeah! Because I forgot what it's telling me.

I: Why couldn't you look at the words here to tell you what to say?

K: Because I forgot what these words said.

When Gillian was asked at 4 years 6 months what was usually inside a book she responded immediately with some enthusiasm, "Stories!" When probed with "anything else" questions she stated that there were "Pages" and "Letters". Asked if there were any words in a book she pointed to the print on the page generally and replied, "Yes. There's a word." She then pointed to "one morning" as a word and then and then to "Babar" with the comment "There's another word."

Asked what she looked at when being read to she replied, "The stories. You look at the stories. At the pictures and the letters." She responded to the initial question at 5 years 7 months with "Pictures and words," and a month later with "Stories, letters, words and pictures."

It could be expected when asking questions of this type of children who were not reading by staying with the print, that the predominant response would involve reference to the pictures. The strategies they were using at this stage of their progress in learning to read, were greatly dependent on the pictures. Even when Gillian, at 5 years 11 months was beginning to make quite extensive use of graphophonic information while engaging in reading-like behaviour, was asked what she did when she was reading, she replied:

> Look at the words. No! Look at the pictures. Here (pointing to a page of a book she was reading), I can see both words and pictures.

Sean's (3;4 and 3;5) positive responses concerning the fact that there were words on the pages, may have been the results of his rapidly growing awareness of print. An examination of the bedtime story reading that he had been engaged in for a period before the interview revealed that Nicol and Pienkowski's Meg on the Moon had been read several times to him by his mother and the investigator. This book contained words like "BOOM", "Put Put", "Lift off" and "Splash," which were incorporated both into the pictures and the text and Sean had, for the first time, started to point to these words as he vigorously participated in the reading. His father also, had been reading Einsel's Did You Ever See to and with him at this time and Sean was able to participate in the reading by completing each question in the book by saying the simple word that was on the following page (e.g. "Did you ever see a shark? ____ bark?).

The mere fact that children refer to what is read in a book as words, does not mean necessarily, that they have a clear understanding of what a word is, nor does it indicate that they understand fully, their role in reading. Kaaren's skillful use of the pictures in her reading of the repeated lines of My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes because she "forgot what the words were telling her", is an example of this. Here, as she usually did when she was engaged in reading-like behaviour and her memory for the text failed her, she used the pictures to provide her with the necessary cues. Young children may know that there are words and letters on the page and that these marks are used in reading in some mysterious manner by whoever reads to them but since they can 'read' their favourite stories by using the pictures and their memory for the text, they may reason that they do not need to learn how to use those black marks on the paper.

None of the children had any difficulty in demonstrating that they not only knew what a page was, but that they knew where the top and the bottom of a page were. Only Sean

(3;3) was uncertain where the beginning and the end of the story were, pointing generally to the front and the back of the book and not the words. All the children knew where the front and the back of the book were. Jennifer's mother reported that she had observed Christopher open a book at the back one day. Jennifer then took it from him, opened it at the front and then gave it back to him.

From his study of 117 four-year olds in New Zealand, the majority of whom came from book-oriented homes, Barney (1976) found that 80 per cent were able to identify the front of a book accurately, 72 per cent could point to the top and the bottom of the page and the same percentage could identify a page in response to the questions "Show me a page," and "Is this a page?" (p. 47) . It can be seen therefore, that even though these concepts appear to be very simple, not all four-year olds, in New Zealand at least, have apparently mastered them.

In response to a question asking them to indicate where the name of the book was, all the children pointed correctly to the title on the cover although Jennifer (3;8) pointed also to the author's name. Sean (3;3) was looking at the Sesame Street magazine and pointed to the title and said "Sesame Street". A month later he did the same with the book My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes, although his pointing was not accurate in the eye-ear-voice matching sense. He did however start at the left and move his finger across the words to the right. Jennifer noted that the title page was different from the cover. She observed: "No. It isn't the same 'cos it has these letters" as she pointed to the words "Written and Illustrated" on the title page. At 3 years 8 months, she was already becoming alert to what was on a page in the form of print.

Both Kaaren (4;8) and Gillian (5;4) not only knew that the title of the book was on the cover but that it was also on the title page. Gillian (5;7) actually read the title of the test booklet Mother and Jennifer Go Shopping and eye-ear-voice matched exactly as she did so. When asked why books have names she replied, "Because so we'll know which one we're looking for." Just prior to that however, she had informed the investigator that she found her books by looking at the pictures on the covers. At 4 years 6 months, after the investigator had finished reading two of her books she insisted that he read the list of titles and authors inside the back covers of the books. While they were being read she commented on a friend having one of the titles, and that her grandfather had given her one of them. She even started echo reading the titles and authors' names after the investigator had read each one. She appeared to be very interested in the titles of books and the authors' names.

Kaaren (4;8) demonstrated that she knew something about how books were made when she replied "Made pictures and words" to a question asking her how the story got into the book. She was then told that the book was written by Eve Sutton and illustrated by Linly Dodd and, after clarifying what illustrated meant in response to a question from her concerning the meaning of the word, the following dialogue took place:

K: And he wrote-

I: Written by - That's a lady's name, Eve Sutton.

K: A girl made it! And is this a man? (Points to the illustrator's name).

I: No, Linly's a lady too.

K: Two ladies make the book!

Kaaren appeared considerably surprised and impressed by the fact that "ladies could make books" and during the next months commented twice more on the fact that "Two Girls made this book." She also asked if another author, Roger Hargreaves was "...a man or a girl" and if Eric Carle (A Very Hungry Caterpillar) "was a boy."

From the observations made by the parents reading to their children it was easy to see where the children's ability to identify the titles of the stories came from. They always started the story by reading the titles on the cover, frequently pointing to it at the same time, and often reading it again on the title page. Sometimes they would read the author's name,(Gillian's parents did so invariably) and sometimes they would discuss the title, especially if it was a book that was being read for the first time.

Perhaps the most interesting features of this aspect of the questioning of their knowledge about books was Kaaren's response to finding out that women could produce books. Up until that point in her life, she must have believed that only men could do so, which provides yet another example of the bias our culture gives to the roles available to the two sexes. The way this little girl responded to her discovery, was as if she was already seeing herself as a future authoress and her obvious fascination with writing could now lead somewhere.

It was not expected that the children in the study would possess very much specific knowledge concerning the names and functions of the various punctuation marks used in written language. In Clay's (1966) study, only a quarter of the children at 5 years, half at 6 years and almost all at 7 years could give even the simplest of explanations ("tells you when you've said enough") for a period, or a "full stop" as it is called in New Zealand. Only Gillian (5;7) could give the label for the period and at 5 years 11 months she explained in response to a question, that you use it "...after someone was saying something."

Jennifer at 3 years 8 months did not appear to have any knowledge of punctuation but Sean at 3 years 5 months, while being read to by the investigator, pointed to a question mark and said, "Dis is a question mark - wight?" He later repeated the observation while Did You Ever See, which has a question mark on every page, was being read. His understanding of their function was not checked unfortunately, but when Kaaren, who knew the label for a question mark was asked why it was put on the page, replied, "So people won't go over it and go on to the other side." pointing to the right hand page.

Whereas the parents were consistent in drawing their children's attention to the titles of the stories read and the children developed their knowledge in this area, they were observed only on rare occasions to refer to the various punctuation marks in a story. Apart from there seldom being a need for them to do so, the concepts are extremely abstract and their function generally very difficult to explain, except perhaps for the question mark, so parents tended to ignore them. The result was of course, that until the children started to write, there was little effort made to have them learn to recognize them and understand their role in written language.

The children's knowledge of the terms "word" and "letter" was checked by using a page in the test booklet with a single line of print on it. They were asked to use two pieces of cardboard as "curtains" and to "close the curtains until we can see just one letter." All the children could complete the task with ease and confidence. Similarly when asked to show two letters, no difficulty was experienced. Sean (3;3) and Jennifer (3;8) however failed on the task that asked them to show "just one word," Sean isolating a letter and Jennifer the last three letters of "favourite," spelling them out in the process. Kaaren (4;7) initially isolated the same three letters, but given a second attempt showed the word "favourite." Gillian (5;7) immediately revealed the word "cereal." Sean and Jennifer showed two letters when asked for two words, but Kaaren and Gillian had no difficulty with this task.

Although these results are very interesting, an examination of other data obtained from a number of observations indicate that the children's understanding and use of these concepts was not always consistent with their responses to these questions. Sean's (3;4) father for example described how he was surprised when he was reading Dr. Seuss' "The Sneetches," to have Sean suddenly point to two words and correctly say "That word says 'in' and that word says 'out'." When asked if he could find the words anywhere else on the page, Sean proceeded to find them in two places. On a previous visit, this investigator had been reading the same book to Sean and he had expressed an interest in the two words which he saw on a machine in one of the pictures in the book. He was helped to identify these words and apparently wanted to demonstrate his knowledge to his father, He was also able to point, on request, to the words "bake" and"end" in the book Did You Ever See, although these words were isolated on each page and the task was therefore a much simpler one. At 3 years 6 months however, he failed again to isolate one word with the "curtains" when asked to do so isolating a single letter again. When asked if there was anything wrong with the line of print where all the spaces between the words had been left out he replied, "That's what's wrong it it. It's a long word."

Gillian (5;7) who had demonstrated complete confidence when asked to isolate letters and words during the administration of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale, when asked how many words there were in "Boo Bee" while a story was being read with her, replied, after counting the letters, "Six." The next word in the book was "Whoa!" and after reading it the investigator asked her to find the word that says "Whoa!" Gillian pointed correctly to it and was then asked how many letters were in the word. She counted to five and was then told that the last thing was an exclamation mark and not a letter. She was asked, "How many words is that? Is that just one word?", to which she replied "Four."

Again when the Reading Concepts Observational Scale was being administered Gillian (5;7) was able to distinguish between "Coke" and "Coca Cola" and was able to do so immediately by pointing, but she caused her father to become rather non-plussed over her response to some of his questions in this area. Gillian (5;7) was starting to 'read' Three

Little Kittens to him and the following discussion took place between them:

G: Three Kittens (for Three Little Kittens)

F: Three Kittens?

G: Three Kittens

F: How many words is that?

G: (Counts letters in "Three") Five (Pointing to the title).

F: Five? Five letters. O.K.

Later when he was discussing this experience with the investigator he called Gillian into the room and the following dialogue was recorded:

F: How many words is that sweetheart? (Points to the title on the book the Three Little Kittens).

G: This one? (Points to "Three")

F: How many words are there? Count just the words. How many words are there?

G: Just the letters are there.

F: Not the letters - the words. How many words are there in the title?

G: One

F: That's one (Points to "Three") What's this? (Points to the remaining words)

G: Two. Three.

F: What's that word? (Points to "Three")

G: Three Little Kittens

F: Three words eh. (With a note of despair in his voice)

It can be seen that these children's understanding of some of these concepts was somewhat flexible and that they used 'letter' and 'word' for example, interchangeably at times.

The difficulty young children experience in mastering these concepts was revealed also in Barney's (1976) study. He reported that only 50 per cent of the 117 four year old children he tested could isolate one letter, while a slightly larger number of 57 per cent could isolate two. He found that 10 per cent could isolate one word and 19 per cent two, and he speculated that the manual dexterity required for manipulating the cardboard window, may have caused the difference to be in favour of the two words and letters task over the one. Clay (1972) for example found that between 40 and 53 per cent of her sample of 100 five year olds could consistently identify one letter, one word and the first letter of a word.

On this latter task, of isolating the first letter of a word and then the last letter, only Gillian (5;7) completed both without difficulty. Kaaren (4;7) on her first attempt revealed the second letter of "Jennifer" and then did the same thing again when asked to repeat the task. However, when asked to use another word she immediately isolated the letter "t" of "takes" and on subsequent testing did not make any further errors. She quickly isolated the "r" of Jennifer" for the last letter task. Her selecting of the second letter of "Jennifer", may have been the outcome of her differentiating between upper and lower case letters in words. In her writing, she almost always used upper case letters, but on one occasion when she was asked why she used "big" or "capital" letters when printing her name she replied, "Oh! You want me to use grown-up writing. O.K.", and then proceeded to use lower case letters for her name, except for the letter "K".

Sean (3;6) could not indicate the first and last letter in a word and he knew that he was failing at the task. He immediately began acting in a babyish manner presumably to take the attention of the investigator away from his failure. Jennifer (3;8) despite the fact that she recognized her name on the page, isolated the "J" and the "e" of her name as the first letter of a word. She would not attempt to isolate the last letter, but proceeded to spell out part of her name by using the letters "J-e-n-n-i."

The studies that have examined the development of children's understanding of the terms related to reading and the relationship this has to learning to read, have usually been conducted with children, after they have entered school. Clay (1966, 1972) for example, found that even after one, and in some cases, two years of instruction in reading, a number of children still had not mastered some of the terms used in the teaching of reading. Downing (1979) listed seventeen studies starting with Reid's

(1966) in Scotland and ending the DeBellefroid and Ferreiro's (1979) in Belgium and Switzerland and concluded, as a result of his examination of these studies:

> ...it seems clear that it is normal for most beginners to enter the task of learning to read in a state of cognitive confusion about the characteristics and purposes of reading activities. (p. 9)

Downing's conclusions seem to be clouded by a number of problems which have seldom been acknowledged in studies which have examined how young children go about the task of learning to read. The idea that young children begin to learn to read only when they enter school and commence receiving instruction has been with us for a long time now. So called "reading readiness" programmes and the term "beginning reader" continue to reinforce this belief. Again, the "cognitive confusion" concept as a cause of reading difficulty has been with us since Vernon (1957) first proposed it and Downing (1979) has argued that:

> ...if cognitive confusion is a fundamental characteristic of reading failure, then the fundamental characteristic of reading success must be cognitive clarity. (p. 6)

What does not seem to have been considered by many of the writers and researchers in this area, is that the cognitive confusion the children experience in learning to read may well be the product of the type of instruction they were receiving. Tovey (1979) describes what he believes to be the current, most widely held view of teachers, of the process of learning to read. He writes:

> Learning to read is frequently perceived as a very difficult task. This point of view is based in part on the traditional belief that one learns to read by first learning the names of the letters of the alphabet, followed by the sounds they represent. Then these letter-sound relationships are applied letter by letter and word by word until a sentence has been "sounded out" thus obtaining meaning. Although most educators would probably deny such a view of reading, it appears to be implicit in much of today's reading instruction. (p. 2)

If this is in fact the current, if somewhat oversimplified view of most of our teachers who implement reading instruction for children during their first two or three years of school, then there would seem to be a strong possibility of at least some of those children becoming cognitively confused. The type of instruction described by Tovey, requires the teacher to make regular use of much of the formal language of reading. However, the results of the current study reveal that, even with a great deal of experience with written language, children may take a long time to assimilate these concepts in the Piagetian sense. The abstract nature of the terminology required to describe the concepts and processes involved may be too difficult for children to deal with at this stage of their development. Instructional procedures which assume that young children have mastered these concepts, or that the mastering of them is a relatively simple learning task, may well be setting up the condition for cognitive confusion to occur.

It can be seen that while their understanding of the formal language about reading was still in the process of being mastered, the four children in this study were learning a great deal about reading, about books and written language. They were also learning to read. Even though they could not answer all the questions asked of them or carry out all the tasks required of them, they could scarcely be described as being "cognitively confused" or lacking in "cognitive clarity." Gillian, despite her problem with the concepts of "words" and "letters", was still using words and letters in her writing and engaging in a tremendous amount of activity with books through reading-like behaviour with the greatest of confidence. As will be seen by the data reported later in this report, she was beginning to use the graphophonic information on the page to reconstruct the story without being dependent solely on her memory for the text and the pictures. Her parents had tried to interest her in learning the "sounds or the letters" but she appeared not to be interested, nor did she seem, as her mother described it, "able to make the connection."

All of the children involved in this study seemed to be engaged in the process of building their own understanding of how written language worked, and to be following the procedure described so aptly by Forester (1975):

> As researchers in the development of children's thought and language have pointed out, in order to make a concept his own, a child has to traverse all the intervening steps needed to develop it if he is ever going to apply it spontaneously. (p. 64)

It was evident, that for some of the concepts examined the traversing of all the intervening steps was a long and involved process, and dependent on a great variety of experiences with written language.

The Conventions of Print

In order to discuss more of what the children understand about the conventions of print used in their books, various questions were asked of them, using the book which accompanied the Reading Concepts Observational Scale (see Appendices E and F). Their mastery of the general directionality skills and the more specific ability of matching their eye, ear and voice with the print were examined also, from time to time, when they were engaged in shared reading experiences with the investigator. Rather than report the data sequentially as it was obtained from the administration of the observation scale, the information has been examined under the headings of directionality, eye-ear-voice matching, unusual print and letter form generalizations.

Directionality

The range of the directionality concepts possessed by the children and examined here, involves their understanding:

1) that reading normally starts with the first word on the first line of print on the left hand side of the page of a book; 2) that the print on the page unfolds from left to right across the page and returns to the first word in the next line; and 3) that it moves in this manner down the page until the last word is reached. If there is print on both pages of an opened book, their understanding that it moves from the bottom of the left hand page to the top of the right hand page, was also tested, and questions were asked as to why we turned the pages of a book as we read it.

Sean appeared to be at a transitional stage in his understanding of where the story started in the book. On two occasions at 3 years 3 months, after opening the book at the correct page, he pointed in a general manner to the first line of print on the first page, but later during the same session pointed exactly to the first word on the page. At 3 years 4 months he pointed to the first word on the last line on the page and then moved his finger up to the first word on the first line. Two months later at 3 years 6 months when asked to point exactly where we would start reading on a page, he pointed to the last two words on the page quite methodically and precisely. Whenever he 'read' the titles of some of his favourite stories however, he usually pointed correctly to the first word in the title and then ran his finger across the page in a generalized manner from left to right, sometimes pointing specifically to some of the words.

Jennifer (3;8) as reported in the previous section had no difficulty in opening the book at the first page to be read and pointed in a generalized manner in a left-to-right progression across and then down the page, as the words were read. Later in the same session she was able to indicate where to start reading on the page exactly. She was observed at 3 years 9 months teaching her younger brother Christopher (2;5) to 'read' Einsel's Did You Ever See, and in the process was pointing exactly to the first words on the pages. She also demonstrated that she knew that words were spelled from left to right. At 3 years 10 months she offered to spell the words "Keep Out" and "Welcome" from a book being read at the time and she did so correctly.

Kaaren (4;7) and Gillian (5;7) had no difficulty with this task and carried it out with great confidence. They also demonstrated that they knew which way the print went down the page. Similarly all the children except Sean (3;3) could indicate which word was to be read, after the last word on the left hand page had been read. At 3 years 6 months Sean's understanding of this concept was tested again and this time he pointed to the first word on the top line of print on the right hand page, whereas on the first occasion he had pointed to the top line of print on the left hand page.

The reasons given for the pages having to be turned were varied, but indicated an understanding on the part of all the children of why the reader had to do this. Sean (3;5) stated that it was, "'Cos you've already read that page," pointing to the right hand page. Jennifer (3;10) said that it had to be done "So you can read." When asked why pages had to be turned, Kaaren (4;10) declared that it was "Because you have to know what the words say," and then in response to a question asking how the reader knew to turn over the page she replied, "Because of the end of the word." Gillian (5;7) was able to be much more explicit than the other three children. In reply to the first question she observed "Because if you did it just with this page, you'd read it all over again," and then on how we knew when to turn the page she stated "Because when you're finished with that - When you see that (pointing to the period after the last word on the page) you're finished the last word."

In his study of 117 four year old kindergarten children already referred to, Barney (1976) found that 49 percent of them could indicate accurately where to begin reading on a page, 59 per cent were able to show which way the print went across the page, and 43 per cent knew that the first line was read, that the second line was read in the same direction. Slightly more than 43 per cent were able to turn the page and point to the correct place on the following page when asked "Where do you go from here?" with "here" being the last word on the right hand page of the book being used. (p. 48)

Once again it can be seen that these concepts of directionality are not learned automatically by all children. The four children in the study had however, made excellent progress and only Sean, the child who had been exposed to by far the least amount of shared book experience, was just beginning to become aware of where to look and what to look at. Since progress in knowing where to read would almost certainly be related to the amount of pointing to the print engaged in by the parents as they read, Sean's experience would again be more limited than the three other children. His mother seldom pointed as she read to the children and he had not obtained the benefits of being read to consistently over a nine month period by the grandmother, like his sister Kaaren. Again, he was the only child in the group who, at the beginning of the visits, was not involved in learning to write and from which he could have learned the directional and word spacing principles involved in producing written language.

These rather generalized understandings of the directional conventions of written language are seen as necessary prerequisites for the children's development of the much more difficult and precise process of matching eye, ear, and voice with what is being read.

Eye-Ear-Voice Matching

Whether children are taught to read in the more formal setting of the school, or they learn to read as Sartre (1964) did, for example, in the more naturalistic setting of the home, they have to learn to give as much or as little attention as they need to, to the visual detail of the print on any page that they are reading. They have to learn why they should pay attention to the black marks on the paper, they have to learn what cues to look at that will be of most use to them, and they have to learn how to look at all the visual information on the page in the most efficient manner. Underneath all of this they have to have a very powerful motivating force that will keep them at the task, wanting to master all of its complexities.

The data related to the children's development of their ability to eye-ear-voice match as they were read to or as they engaged in reading-like behaviour, were collected in different ways. Some data resulted from the direct observation by the investigator of the children when they were in book experience situations with either of the parents, while some came from the parents' observations of their children, reported in their Reading Logs. Some resulted from participant observation while the investigator was interacting with the children with their books, and some came from the administration of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale during which the children were asked to "point to the words as I read."

The first occasion that Sean (3;1) demonstrated in the presence of the investigator that he was aware there was anything else on the page of a book other than pictures was when his mother was reading Meg on the Moon to both the children and he interrupted her with great excitement in his voice saying, "There's our Jotul again!" His mother continued reading momentarily and then asked him what he meant. Sean repeated what he had said, but this time pointed to the letter "o" in "moon". His mother then explained to the investigator how he had found a letter on the wood stove (brand name JØTUL) that was the same as one in the book. The fact that "o" in JØTUL had a slash through it did not seem to deter him and this was the only letter he focussed his attention on. The letter "o" then came to stand for the word JØTUL.

Over the next two months, Sean was observed pointing to individual words occasionally as Did You Ever See and Meg on the Moon were read to him, but this was always at the request of the person reading to him. He was never observed attemptint to eye-ear-voice match of his own volition as he engaged in reading-like behaviour.

During the administration of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale, Sean (3;3) was asked to point to the words on a page as they were read to him. He pointed vaguely by running his finger across the page where the words were, but made no attempt to point to any particular word. He apparently knew which way the print went across the page and realized that the black marks were what was being read, but pointing to individual words was at this stage, beyond him. He followed the same procedure on several occasions during this session, when asked to do the task again.

A month later however Sean (3;4), when asked if he could 'read' the title of one of his repeatedly read books, <u>My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes</u>, did so in a voice pointing manner, separating each word distinctly up to "Hide" and finger pointing at the same time. The "x's" below the words indicate where he pointed with his finger.

```
My - Cat - Likes - to - Hide in Boxes
 x    x    x    x         x      x   x
```

The investigator then asked him to point to the words as he (the investigator) read the title. He carried out the task in a similar manner for the first two words and then slid his finger along over the remainder of the words as they were read. Sean then pointed to the last word in the title and asked "What does this say?" and was told "Boxes". It was during this session that he responded to the question concerning how we know what to say when we are reading by saying "There's words down the page. That's how we know." It was in this session also, when he showed great interest in the words "IN" and "OUT" in the Dr. Seuss', <u>The Sneetches</u> by initially pointing to each of them and asking what they said and then proceeding to find them in the context of the story.

It can be seen then, that in a relatively short period of time Sean had become much more aware of the print on the page, to the point where he had begun to ask the very important question, "What does that say?" His eye-ear-voice matching indicated that he had progressed to the point where he would stay on a line of print and not only voice point, but also finger point with some degree of accuracy. It should be noted however that the initial pointing task he did here was carried out as he 'read' the title of the story. This was not the same kind of task as trying to point as someone else reads, as his second attempt demonstrated.

Two weeks later Sean was asked to point as the investigator read the final line of Carle's The Very Hungry Caterpillar with the following result:

He was a beautiful butterfly.
x x x x x

It can be seen that he knows where to start and finish but still has not learned to separate the sounds he hears into units and the multisyllabic words may have caused him further difficulty. At 3 years 5 months however, he was 'reading' parts of Meg on the Moon and pointed exactly to the words in the following line as he 'read':

We have a lift off!
x x x x x

It should be noted that all these words are monosyllabic ones, that the print he was pointing to was large and bold, and that he had 'read' this line of print many times, occasionally being asked to point as he did so.

A further check was made of his ability to point to the words as they were read to him from the observational scale test booklet and although he again demonstrated that he could follow along a line of print, and return correctly to the first word in the next line, he still could not match his finger with the reader's voice and the words on the page. He pointed in a sequential but random fashion as he moved his finger across the page.

Jennifer, at 3 years 6 months, seemed to be at the stage that Sean was at by the conclusion of the visits, although she could consistently and accurately indicate where to start reading on a page and Sean still could not always do that correctly. She pointed in a left to right direction but, as will be seen, she did not always do that at 3 years 5 months. She was also trying to point to separate words but could not match word-space-word accurately. When the last word was read on the page however, she pointed to that.

The following series of entries from the Reading Log recorded by the mother indicate the range of pointing activity that Jennifer experienced either independently, or with her mother.

> Nov. 17 (Jennifer 3;5)
> We read "Inside-Outside, Upside Down" by the Berenstains. It is a single concept book. After I read the words on each page - J. would point to the words and run her finger from left to right across the page and repeat the words, e.g. "Inside the box"
>
> Dec. 12, (Jennifer 3;6)
> She listened to the Grinch story several times today on the record that accompanied the book. She would point to the words and turn the pages as the story was told on the record.
>
> Dec. 15
> This a.m. she picked up a letter of her father's and pointed to the words and moved her finger from left to right and pretended to read the letter. She made up a very complicated story about a little boy and a dog.

During a visit conducted around the time of this last Reading Log entry, Jennifer was observed engaged in echo reading with the father, Berenstain's Inside-Outside Upside Down. On the last page the father encouraged Jennifer to point to the words as she echo read each line. She matched the first line which contained only two words, exactly, going from left to right. The next line she matched exactly as she 'read', but pointed from right to left. She proceeded down the page using this zig-zag technique and then repeated it when the father reread the page with her.

It is perhaps useful to contrast her approach to matching eye, ear, and voice at this stage with that observed five months later when Jennifer was 3 years 10 months old. She was 'reading' the title of Bruna's, I Can Read and in the process she started by covering "Can Read" with her hand and saying "I", then using both hands she covered, "I" and "Read" and said "Can", and finally covered, "I" and "Can" and said "Read". As she 'read' one of the pages she finger and voice pointed with the following result:

```
Text:  And this is my mouth.
        x   x     x
J1:    And-this-is-my (pause)

Text:  And this is my mouth.
        x   x  x x  x
J2:    And-this-is-my-mouth.
```

She apparently realized that she did not have enough words left on the line on her first attempt (J1) since she pointed to "my" as she said "is", so decided to reread (J2) in an attempt to match correctly. At the end of the story she followed a similar procedure:

```
Text:  So you see I can read.
       x  x     x
J1:    So-you-see-I (pause)

Text:  So you see I can read.
       x  x  x  x x  x
J2:    So-you-see-I-can-read.
```

Here, she realized that she was not matching correctly since she could recognize the word "I", so she went back to the previous word, pointed accurately and finished the sentence. Her mother had recorded in the <u>Reading Log</u>, ten days previous to this observation, that Jennifer had learned the word "I".

> Apr. 18
> Read "Green Eggs and Ham". At the last page she read "Sam-I-am", and pointing to each word separately. We turned to the front page and she read "I am Sam". Then she wanted to find Sam on the other pages. Next she noticed a page where most

> of the sentences began with the word "I" and she was quite excited because she knew that word. Again tonight she wanted to spell more words before she went to bed.

The last observation perhaps provides one of the keys as to why Jennifer was able to move to a sophisticated level of skill in eye-ear-voice matching. On the visit six months previously, when she had been observed pointing in her zig-zag manner down the page, she had learned to print her own name correctly for the first time, with help from her father. From that time until the end of the visits, Jennifer had engaged in a great deal of writing activity, mainly with her mother's help. This, coupled with the amount of reading and pointing activity that she had been involved in, would have contributed greatly to her growing awareness of the form in which written language was recorded and to the accuracy with which she could ear-eye-voice match by the age of 3 years 10 months. The fact that Jennifer had made a beginning on using the visual information on the page in checking the accuracy of her eye-ear voice matching was a significant development in her understanding of the processes involved in reading.

Kaaren was 4 years 4 months old when the observational visits commenced. On the second visit she demonstrated her awareness that the print on the page carried the message. Her mother had just read the final lines of a story where the size of the print became smaller and smaller and she had made her voice, softer and softer. The following dialogue took place between Kaaren and her mother:

K: I want to see which one is small.
Is this one the smallest one, and this one makes dum ditty, dum ditty, dum? (Pointing to the words)
M: How does it go on the page? Where's the dum and where's the ditty?
K: Here's a dum and here's a ditty. (Pointing)
M. And that's a -
K: Here's a ditty.
M: And what are these three? (Pointing to dum, dum, dum)
K: Ditty (Uncertainty in her voice)
M: Are they? (Indicating by her tone that K was wrong)
K: There's dum.
M: Yeah. Dum, dum, dum. So it's (Reading and pointing) Dum ditty, Dum ditty, Dum, dum, dum. And as they get smaller. Mummy kept reading them softer and softer.

It was interesting to note that throughout all of this, Sean did not demonstrate any curiosity in what was happening, nor did his mother try and involve him. It was as if there was no expectation on the part of the mother that he would be able to understand what she and Kaaren were talking about.

The final lines of two other books were used to direct Kaaren's (and sometimes Sean's) attention to the print on the page. The last page of Meg on the Moon contained the word "Goodbye" and the mother directed the children's attention to this by asking:

M: Is there a word on that page?
K: Yep!
M: What does that word say?
K: Goodbye!
M: Right! There it is. (Pointing)
K: Goodbye!

Similarly with the last page of The Very Hungry Caterpillar which had been read repeatedly, Kaaren invariably 'read' the words, although not always accurately, and was encouraged to point. Her inaccurate 'reading' interfered with her eye-ear-voice matching as she would 'read' "He looked like a beautiful butterfly" for, "He was a beautiful butterfly" and this caused her to run out of words to point to.

This problem occurred in two other books in which Kaaren (4;8) tried to voice and finger point. In My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes she created a difficulty for herself in the following way when 'reading' it to the investigator:

Text: But my cat likes to hide in boxes.
x x x x x x
K: My-cat-likes-to-hide-in _____ What does this word say? (Pointing to in)
I: That's "In". What's the last word?
K: Boxes.
I: You point again and start from the beginning.
K: My cat ___
I: What does it start with? Does it start with "My cat" or "But"?
K: My. My-cat-likes-to-hide-in ____ (Starting again by pointing to "But")

I: You're still not quite right are you?
K: (Starts again) My-cat-likes-to ____. This is "to"? (Points to "to"). This is "hide" ____ no, "in boxes". (Points to the last two words)
I: That's right. The first word is __?
K My
I: No. "But". There's "my". Can you point to "my"? (K. points to "my") So the first word is "But". Can you say that again?
K: But.
I: Now point.
K: But-my-cat-likes-to-hide-in-boxes. (Eye-ear-voice matches perfectly)
I: Right! Why couldn't you get it matched up before?
K: Don't know.

Kaaren continued her 'reading' of the story starting the repetitive line on three separate occasions with "my" but stopping and self-correcting. The fourth time she came to the line she 'read' it without miscuing and was not observed making the same mistake again. Although the investigator could not be certain of what cues Kaaren was using to correct her 'reading' of this line, it seemed as if she was relying on her memory for the text rather than using the visual information on the page. Her comment that she did not know why she could not match accurately at first, would tend to support this interpretation.

This difficulty occurred with Kraus' Boris Bad Enough which Kaaren (4;8) 'read' as "Boris is Bad Enough", mainly because there was a repetitive line in the text which read "Boris is good enough". Her knowledge of syntax also, would almost certainly cause her to think that a verb was needed as she had not understood that it was Boris' name. While 'reading' part of this book, another problem with accurate eye-ear-voice matching was demonstrated and it was one that Gillian experienced difficulty with as well.

As young children begin to attempt to match what they are seeing on the page with what they are saying, they will frequently adopt quite naturally, a voice pointing procedure; that is they will begin to say each word separately as if they are pointing with their voices. One of the problems which occurs as a result of this, is that they not only separate the words, they separate the words into syllables. When they try to 'read' and match with both their finger and their voice, they run out of words to point to, at the end of the line - provided of course that there are some multisyllabic words within the line of print.

Once Kaaren had established her memory for the line "My cat likes to hide in boxes", she was always able to eye-ear-voice match correctly when she 'read' it. The only multisyllabic word in the line occurs at the end. But a line in Boris Bad Enough caused her trouble. It read, "Nonsense!" said Boris' mother." and as Kaaren 'read' and voice pointed "nonsense" became two words so her finger pointed to "said" as she said "sense" and this in turn, caused her to run out of words by the end of the line. She did not try to resolve the difficulty but continued on 'reading' without any further pointing. Gillian used this strategy of ignoring the problem also, by reverting to fluent 'reading' with no finger or voice pointing, when it occurred.

When Kaaren's (4;7) ability to eye-ear-voice match was checked through the use of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale it was found that, although she appeared to understand that each word was a separate unit, she could not match exactly, when sentences containing myltisyllabic words were read to her. For example she coped with the following sentence "Today they are going to the IGA Foodliner super-

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market" up to the "I" of "IGA:, and then pointed to "Foodliner" when "G" was said and "supermarket" when "A" was said despite the fact that her ability to recognize and name the upper case letters of the alphabet was excellent. However, when the sentence "Jennifer knows which door to go out" was read to her, she was able to match exactly.

Although Kaaren was able to eye-ear-voice match accurately, her accuracy was dependent upon how well she was able to remember the text and on whether or not the line of print she was pointing to contained very many multisyllabic words in initial or medial positions in the sentences. Regardless of the fact that she was able to write a number of words correctly from memory and on occasions identify words within the context of stories being read to her, she still did not appear to be using graphophonic information from the print to assist her in checking the accuracy of her eye-ear-voice matching. Her ignoring of the letters IGA referred to previously was an example of this.

During one of the visits Kaaren (4;9) was reading her recently arrived Sesame Street magazine with the investigator. She found and 'read', both fluently and with voice and finger pointing, a number of sentences such as, "Grover is out of the bathtub", "Grover is in the bathtub". She then proceeded to successfully complete the task "Is Grover in or out? Circle the word'in'." When asked how she knew which word was"in" she replied, "Because it's the first word which is green." The words "in" and "out" were both green in colour and Kaaren obviously had remembered which word came first in the sentence and then used the colour to select it. She followed the same procedure when she completed the task, "Is Grover in or out? Circle the word 'out'." Again she explained how she completed the task; "Because that's the last word which is green," and yet she could spell both words accurately from memory and knew which was the biggest word. When the two words were shown to her together without any context, she was able to identify which was which. It was as if she had not yet realized that she could use the visual cues to identify words and to check her guesses or that she did not need to in this context. She knew all the letter names of the alphabet and could reproduce all of them in print. She could spell some words correctly and produce her own "invented spelling" which was usually phonetically consistent.

Reference has already been made to the point recorded by Clay (1977) that children find it far less difficult to go from sound to print than vice versa. In her efforts at writing, Kaaren already had the sounds of the language, a knowledge of the letter names and shapes with which she could approximate the sounds she wanted to record on the page. She had, for a period of 20 months been gaining experience in producing written language. She was doing as

Holdaway (1979) suggests, when he states:

> Children tend to work from their strengths - they use processes with which they are familiar before they master new ways of operating. They need the support of the familiar in order to learn the strange. (p. 89)

But in her learning to use the visual information available in print to aid her to eye-ear-voice match more effectively and eventually to read what was on the page, she had only very recently, begun to master the intricacies of knowing where to look. She was probably still building the delicate control mechanisms needed to move her eyes in a series of regular, controlled, saccadic movements across the page focussing and refocussing her eyes constantly. This is a task of incredible magnitude for the young learner and one that has seldom been acknowledged by those who have studied how children learn to read. Although Clay (1972a) is referring to five year old children who were at school, in the following observation, her comments apply equally well to any child who is being immersed in written language through book experience as she writes:

> At some time during the first year at school visual perception begins to provide cues but for a long period these are piecemeal, unreliable and unstable. This is largely because the child must learn where and how to attend to print. Slowly the first sources of cues from experience and from spoken language are supplemented by learning along new dimensions, such a letter knowledge, word knowledge, letter sound associations and pronounceable clusters of letters. As differences within each of these dimensions gradually become differentiated the chances of detection and correction of error are increased. (pp. 161-3)

It would appear that Kaaren was actively engaged in the process of learning "where and how to attend to print" and was beginning to build her strategies for dealing with it, but was not sufficiently confident to use with any certainty, any knowledge she has already gained concerning the letter to sound relationships of her language. In constructing their rule system for oral language usage, young children need time, immersion in their language, and the constant opportunity to experiment and approximate in their efforts to use language effectively to meet their needs. Accuracy is not expected of them and there is usually someone with them to serve as a "sounding board" for their attempts. Learning to build their knowledge of the rule system that governs written language in the same self-directed ways, requires similar kinds of opportunities and experiences, but because of the greatly reduced amoung of time spent with written language when compared with that of oral language, children's rates of progress are naturally slower and for a variety of reasons perhaps more hesitant. Jennifer (3;10) it appeared, was just beginning to use some of the visual information on the page to check the accuracy of her eye-ear-voice matching. Kaaren, although she could use this type of information to identify individual words on occasions,had still not, it appeared, begun to use it to assist her in matching her voice and/or her finger with the print.

At 4 years 6 months, Gillian was a rather curious mixture with regard to her awareness of print. On the one hand, when asked if there were any words in a book she proceeded to point to some in the book being read with the comment, "There's a word" (pointing to two words) and then, "There's another word - Babar". She also demonstrated that she could print her own name, although she did not exhibit the same control in her printing that either Jennifer (3;10) or Kaaren (4;7) had. She then printed six separate upper case letters, "W", "I", "O", "B", "C", and "H" and claimed that they were words. When asked how her mother knew which cereal to buy at the supermarket for their breakfast the following dialogue took place:

G: 'Cos she buys (bought) them before.
I: Is there anything else that tells her?
G: Because there's squares on the front.
I: Anything else?
G: Winnie the Pooh! Because Winnie the Pooh is on there, so she picks it up.
I: Oh. It's got pictures on it. Has it got any words on it?
G: No.

During the same session Gillian was asked to point to the words in a line of print as de Brunhoff's <u>Meet Babar and His Family</u> was read to her with the following result:

```
The snow falls in huge flakes.
 x    x         x  x   x  x
```

She knew where to start, matched the number of words with what was being read, and moved from left to right, but could not eye-ear-voice match exactly. Reference has already been made to her interest in the list of titles and authors inside the back cover of this book. She pointed to the words in the list with the question, "Now what kind of books do you get here?". As the investigator read the titles and pointed to the words, she stopped him with the question, "What's that?" pointing to an illustrator's name demonstrating her awareness, it would seem, that he was not reading everything on each line of print.

At this stage then, Gillian probably used the terms "words" and "letters" interchangeably, and although she was aware of their presence in books, and even that they could serve a purpose, she was not aware of their presence on the brand of cereal the family used. She was able to 'read' a number of her favourite stories with a high degree of accuracy, but always 'read' them using a fluent, adult style and had not commenced to engage in any self-initiated, voice or finger pointing as she 'read'. Print still seemed for Gillian, to be in a transparent or out-of-awareness state to a large extent, although on occasions she indicated an awareness of its presence.

On the first of the series of observational visits to her home, approximately ten months later, Gillian (5;5) was 'reading' one of her Disney Club books, The Brave Little Tailor to the investigator with some help. The book was the most recent acquisition to her library and had not been read to her on very many occasions, so her reproduction of the story was aided by the investigator reading the first few words on most pages. Gillian however, 'read' the remainder of each page fluently, although without a great deal of accuracy. On three occasions during her 'reading' she stopped and asked, "Am I finished reading those words?". Later when the investigator was reading another story she asked the questions, "What does that say?" and "What does it say there?" pointing to words in the text, the first of which was "nincompoop". It appeared to be the length of the word that attracted her attention. Although she was observed engaging in a great deal of reading-like behaviour throughout this visit, at no time did she 'read' using voice and/or finger pointing, but reproduced her stories using adult fluency, phrasing and intonation patterns.

Despite the fact that she had begun to ask the all important question "What does that say?" which demonstrated that she was beginning at least to be curious about the print on the page, she still had not begun to attend to it as she engaged in reading-like behaviour. Self-directed voice pointing had still not appeared, although it had been established during this visit, that she could match exactly with her fingers, as a short sentence containing monosyllabic words was read to her. No check was made of her ability to do this as she 'read' a favourite story.

During the second visit Gillian (5;5) began to exhibit voice and finger pointing behaviour as she 'read' her most favourite story <u>Three Little Kittens</u>. She had just 'read' the "The three little kittens" and was asked by the investigator, "Where does it say the three little kittens?" Gillian then 'reread' the line slowly, voice and finger pointing, but saying "little" and "kitten" in syllables. Of course she ran out of words, but this did not seem to bother her and she simply pointed twice in the area of the period as follows:

```
Text:   The three little kittens.
         x    x     x      x     xx
G:      The-three-lit-  -tle-kit-tens.
```

Two lines further on she was asked to show where the line "And hung them out to dry" was, with the following result:

```
Text:   And hung them out to dry.
         x   x     x   x   x   x
G:      And-hung-them-out-to-dry.
```

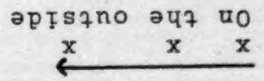
Because there were no multisyllabic words in the sentence, Gillian could match exactly. Further on in the book, the final two lines on a page were, "Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow. Yes. I smell a rat close by." Gillian turned over to the next page before reading those lines, but turned back immediately and 'read' what she had missed. When asked why she had done that she replied, "Because they all said "Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow". When asked where these words were she 'reread' the two lines, voice and finger pointing accurately as follows:

Text: Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow.
x x x x x x
G: Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow.

Text: I smell a rat close by.
x x x x x x
G: I-smell-a-rat-close-by.

As if to demonstrate her growing awareness of the print being on the page, when the investigator was reading a new book he had bought for her, Rey's Curious George Gets a Medal, she began at her own instigation during the second reading of it, to find the words "George", "ink", and "pump" in the book. She found 76 "Georges", 5 "inks" and 7 "pumps". She had no difficulty with "George" or "pump" but on one occasion pointed to "like" for "ink", probably because of the letters "i" and "k". At one stage during her search for the word "George" she found six on one page. Her brother Gregory, who was watching her do this told her she had missed one. This caused her to go back over the page and run her finger along each line very carefully, and finding all the words she was looking for. She following this procedure for the remainder of the book. Her attention span for this task was very long and she seemed to derive great pleasure from it.

As a final indication that Gillian had by this stage of her development become very attentive to print, she demonstrated that she could point to words as they were read in an upside down position. In a Disney Club, Jokes and Riddles Book the words "On the outside" were printed upside down. She was asked if she could read that page and proceeded to do so. She was then asked to point to the words as the investigator read them with the following result:



Despite the fact that Gillian (5;5) at this stage indicated that she could point to words on request and could self-direct her own efforts at finding words in a book the following dialogue between her and the investigator, demonstrates that the concept of a word was still not clearly established in her thinking. The Jokes and Riddles Book had a picture of a box of soap powder in it with the words SOAP POWDER printed on it. Gillian was asked what it said on the packet:

G: Soap
I: How many words are there?
G: S-O-A-P. (Spells as she points)
I: That's letters. There's four letters. But how many words? What's the word that says soap?
G: (Points to the word correctly)
I: All right, that's the word. Is there another word on the packet?
G: (Points to the word "POWDER)
I: How many words are on the packet?
G: (Pointing and counting all the letters) Ten!

The following entries in the Reading Log by her mother, which she commenced maintaining a few days after the visit just referred to, gives some indication of the type of activity that was occurring which would facilitate the development of Gillian's print awareness and eye-ear-voice matching:

Nov. 29

While reading a bedtime story to her, she follows the plot closely and finds specific words when asked. Says she looks for the first letter of the word (which she guesses from the sound) then proceeds to follow the print until she finds it. Pointed to the last word on the page because it's "the last word on the page."

Dec. 1

While reading Curious George Gets a Medal, she proudly asked to "Stop" when we reached all the words she had memorized in the story. Made slow progress with the story reading because she was trying very hard to actually read each page. She seems unable to memorize long passages due to this striving to actually "know and recognize each word."

Dec. 4

"Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was selected by Gillian tonight for our usual bedtime story. This is her own book and yesterday I purchased the record/story of [the] same. She listened to the record and 'read' along on the appropriate pages as the narrator instructed. Pointed out several words to me (and she was correct on all counts).

Dec. 8

Received her first Xmas card today. Spent time memorizing the verse - conquered same. When asked where specific words were located, she 'read' with her finger until she found the desired word. There are several words she can find without a search on the card.

Jan. 20

Read part of "Mr. Whiskers" (Gr. 1 reader)while Greg.Read 50-odd pages of same. Gill. pays strict attention of Greg. (he demands it of course with his strong will). He also (when reading to her) underlines passages with his finger and even asks her where certain key words are located.

Considering that this is a selected sample of the range of activities that Gillian was engaged in throughout each day, it is not difficult to see why she was making rapid progress in becoming more and more aware of print. Her self-directed activity of finding known words, of searching along a line of print until she came to a word with the first letter that matched the sound she heard and her own efforts to memorize her recorded stories and the cards that she received, all provided avenues for this learning to occur. Apart from her own self-directed efforts, she had her mother and her brother assisting her.

From the administration of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale it was confirmed that when material was read to Gillian (5;7) she could eye-ear-voice match, even when the sentences contained multisyllabic words. The only exception to this was when the sentence "Today they are going to shop at the IGA Foodliner Supermarket" was read to her. With this she used the same pointing procedure as Kaaren. When "G" and "A" were said, she pointed to "Foodliner" and "Supermarket". However, asked to find the words "Coca Cola", she was able to find them both in the text and in the picture, which had a can with "Coke" and a can with "Coca Cola" showing. When asked what was on the cans she pointed correctly and said, "That just says "Coke" but that says "Coca Cola". Although Gillian was not aware, at a conscious level, at least, that words were separated by white spaces (as the results of a later task showed) it is probable that at an implicit level, she saw "IGA" as one word. Since she was being asked to point without any demands for recognizing words, she may not have paid careful attention to the print. With the "one word, two words" task, she was asked to look at the print and through her more careful attention to the visual information on the page and perhaps through past experience, was able to complete the task successfully.

This inconsistency in matching accurately was revealed again during this same visit when Gillian (5;7) was 'reading' one of her favourite books, Pemberton's My Big Book of Pretty Pussies. This is a 27-page book containing verses written in large clear print, with a marked rhythmical and rhyming pattern of language and with pictures which strongly supported the text. Gillian could 'read' all the verses in this book and had reached the stage where she would not let her mother read it to her. Her mother reported:

> That's the only book where she underlines with her finger. The others, it's just occasionally if she wants to read a few words so she may point it out with her finger, but that book (My Big Book of Pretty Pussies) its always.

It would seem that Gillian may have been using this book in the manner in which Gardner (1969) reported many of his early readers had used their favourite stories which they had memorized. He speculated that these children isolated a single piece of writing in this way "as a means for investigating our written code." (p. 20)

The following transcripts demonstrate how Gillian was using this book for this purpose and how she still experienced difficulty eye-ear-voice matching when she came to some multisyllabic words in the text. In response to a comment Gillian made concerning how she could learn to read if she "practiced more", the investigator asked her to show him how she would do this. She immediately turned to My Big Book of Pretty Pussies and began to engage in reading-like behaviour:

Text	Gillian
I'm a present	
x x	I'm-a-
x x x	I'm-a-present
Like a box of cigars	
x x x x x	Like-a-box-of-cigars
Or a new set of cars	
x x x x x x	Or-a-new-set-of-cars
Or a railway train	
x x x	Or-a-ra-
x x x x x	Or-a-railway-train
A mechanical crane	
x x x x	And-a-mechanical-crane
I'm a present	
x x x	I'm-a-present
I hope you like me	
x x x x x	I-hope-you-like-me.

Gillian read this very deliberately but still with good intonation, despite her careful voice and finger pointing.

When she voice pointed she usually syllabicated the multisyllabic words very clearly, but even with the word "mechanical" she did not do this here. She started to syllabicate "railway" , and it would appear, saw that this was one word, took a rerun at the line and matched correctly without syllabicating the word. With the insertion of the high quality miscue of "And", it was thought that she would experience difficulty in matching. She overcame her dilemma however, by pointing twice to "mechanical" since it was a long word and although she did not syllabicate it she said it clearly and distinctly as if to give herself time to point to it twice to allow for her insertion of "And".

On another verse she started reading fluently trying to point with her finger as she 'read' by running her finger underneath the words. She reached the end of the verse with her finger before she had 'read' half of the verse. She then changed her style of 'reading' to voice pointing, started to finger point and match, and proceeded to the end of the page in this manner. The following transcript attempts to demonstrate what she did:

Text		Gillian
I was running	Ran her finger	I was running
around a lot	across and down	around
yesterday.	the page and was	yesterday
And my feet	pointing to the	And my feet
started aching	last line when her	started aching
a bit.	voice reached	quite a bit.
So I went to ←	here.	
x x x x	Then commenced	So-I-went-to-

Text		Gillian
choose x	finger and voice pointing.	choose
A new pair x x x		A-A-new-pair I mean pair
of shoes x x		of-shoes
But as you can x x x x		But-you-can
see they x x		see-they-really
don't fit. x x		don't-fit.

When asked why she took her finger back and started pointing and how she knew that she was not matching she replied: "Because they don't rhyme good." It is assumed that she may have meant that she was not able to eye-ear-voice match effectively when she was reading fluently.

A careful examination of this transcript revealed that Gillian made three high quality miscues while reading. The first two of these ("a lot" omitted; "quite" inserted) did not effect her matching since she was 'reading' fluently and not attempting to point to each word at this stage. Her omission of "as" was compensated for by the insertion of "really" so she was able to maintain accurate matching here. Another feature of her behaviour was the fact that she was able to pick up with her finger where she had reached with her voice, when she switched to voice and finger pointing. This would indicate that she must have cued to the visual information on the page in order to achieve this.

As a result of her attempt at 'reading' the page of *My Big Book of Pretty Pussies,* Gillian made a highly significant comment concerning one of the problems she experienced when she attempted to match with her eye-ear-voice and finger. The following is the transcript of her 'reading':

Text	Gillian
I was sitting in a	
x x x x a	I-was-sitting-in-a
tankard one day.	
x x	tan-kard-one
(Abandoned finger pointing)	
x x x	tan-kard-one-day
Just biding my time.	Just-biding-my-time
When I noticed	When-I (pause) noticed
	(long pause,investigator)
	reads "When I noticed")
	When I noticed
that my friend Willy	my friend Willy
was drinking	drinking
blackberry wine.	blackberry wine.
He drank quite a lot	He drinks quite a lot
for a cat.	for a cat.
He's like that.	He likes that.

She 'read' the first line of the verse, carefully enunciating every word, syllabicating "tan-kard" and pointing with her finger. When she reached "one" with her finger, she realized that she did not have sufficient words left to point to, so she repeated "tan-kard", pointing again to "tankard" and "one". At this stage she gave up finger pointing but continued to voice point until she reached "When I noticed". Unfortunately, the investigator then prompted her by saying "When I noticed" and she immediately reverted to fluent 'reading' without any finger pointing.

Once again it can be seen that the miscues were all high quality ones, and that she demonstrated the behaviour of switching from voice to finger pointing to voice pointing to fluent 'reading', with some prompting from the investigator. At the conclusion of her skillful rendition of this behaviour however, she was asked if she was reading the words or just saying the words, to which she replied: "Just saying the words 'cos if point I get all mixed up." As a result of her problem with "tankard" in the first line of the previous verse, it would appear that she decided the best strategy was to stop finger pointing altogether. Her long pause on "noticed" may have been the result of her trying to use graphophonic cues to help her 'read', but with a prompt from the investigator, she decided to revert to her fluent, reading-like behaviour, at which she was so expert.

At 5 years 9 months, Gillian explained a technique she employed to find words, using the graphophonic information on the page. In order to make it work, she had to be able to eye-ear-voice match accurately. She had just 'read' fluently a line in her book, "Lambert purred like a kitten" and the following dialogue took place between her and the investigator:

I: Where's the word kitten?
G: ("Rereading", voice and finger pointing). Lambert-purred-like-a-kitten. (Pointed to each word in turn but kept her finger on "kitten").
I: Tell me how you worked that out. What did you do?
G: "Cos I had to look for the word Lambert.
I: Do you know the word Lambert?
G: I don't know.
I: Do you know the word Lambert?
G: I know that it starts with an "L".
I: I see. So you find Lambert.
G: And there's another Lambert! (Pointing correctly).

Reference has already been made in the Reading Log data to where her mother had recorded observing Gillian using this technique effectively. On another occasion her mother reported how it caused Gillian some difficulty when there was another word in the line of print with the same first letter as the one she was searching for. But just as the problem of multisyllabic words caused word matching difficulties that had to be overcome through self-discovery methods, so would the problem of confusion arising from her dependence on only initial letter cues probably cause Gillian to look for a wider range of cues.

During the second last observational visit, Gillian (5;11) demonstrated how she was learning to use eye-ear-voice matching coupled with her knowledge of the visual information that was available to her to learn to read accurately and fluently. She had received a new book from the Disney Club, Button Soup recently and it had been read to her on only two or three occasions previously. She had been 'reading' it to and with the investigator, mostly through using echo reading techniques, but at one point she stated, "I think I can read it now" and the following is a transcript of her attempt:

Text	Gillian
You won't find any food around here, he said.	You won't find any food around - No - that's food (without finger pointing).

Text	Gillian
	You-won't-find any food around he-here-he-said.
He tried to hide some dirty dishes.	He tried to hide some dirty dishes. (Repeats, but voice points) He-tried-to-hide-some dirty dishes.

Here we see Gillian using all the strategies that she has available at the moment to read and stay with the print. Initially she probably used her memory for the text plus, of course, her knowledge of the syntax of the language. Although she was not voice pointing, she realized that what she was seeing did not match what she was saying. It is possible that just as in fluent adult oral reading, her eyes had moved ahead of what she was saying, so she stopped and took a rerun at the sentence. This time, in order to eye-ear-voice match more efficiently, she switched in, then out, and then in again to voice pointing, until she had passed the difficult section. At this point she reverted to her fluent reading style. But in order to run a check on how accurate she had been, she reread the last sentence, this time voice pointing. Once she was satisfied that she had been right the first time, she reverted to fluent reading.

In a very real sense, despite the fact that she probably had developed only a limited range of graphophonic knowledge, Gillian was using the strategies employed by competent adult readers. She read using excellent intonation and phrasing patterns. She read with great fluency, except where she changed to voice pointing. She probably used her knowledge of the story and her control over the "language of books" to allow her to predict what might come next. And she was using as little of the visual information available to her on the page as she needed, in order to confirm her predictions. Finally, of course, she was using the strategies that she had been able to develop through her own self-directed and self-regulated efforts.

It can be seen that Gillian had moved from being rather vaguely aware of the presence of letters and words on a page at 4 years 6 months, to a sophisticated, but tentative use of many of the strategies employed by fluent adult readers. In order to do this she had become increasingly aware of specific words on the pages of her stories. She had frequently directed her own efforts to find these words and had also on occasion been encouraged to do so by those who read to her. She had made use of her favourite stories and had made extensive use of one book in particular, to develop increasing skill in voice pointing. Ultimately, she was able to overcome most of the confusing and complex tasks in learning to eye-ear-voice match consistently. In so doing, she had been building her control over the eye movements so essential for efficient reading and may even have moved into beginning to use the intricate process of keeping her eyes ahead of her voice as she read orally. While the evidence for this last assumption is undoubtedly flimsy, the remainder of the conclusions concerning Gillian's reading development will be supported in subsequent sections of this report by further transcripts and observations made of her interactions with books.

Eye-ear-voice matching, with its voice and finger pointing components, can be seen to play a central role in these children's emergent reading behaviours. As they developed increasing awareness of print, they seemed to establish an inner drive to match, with increasing accuracy, what they were 'reading' with what was on the page. In the process of doing this and in their continuing self-directed efforts to master the task, they were beginning to take notice of some of the visual information available from the print. Gillian and Jennifer had begun to use this information to confirm their predictions but Kaaren and Sean, who had engaged in far less eye-ear-voice matching activity than the other two children, did not seem to have reached the same stage.

Fluent, reading-like behaviour, unless it moves to the more arhythmical pattern which is characteristic of the voice and finger pointing 'reader', will not provide children with the opportunity to begin to direct their own learning to read strategies. As Clay (1972) suggests:

> Developmentally there is usually a gradual transition in good readers from finger-pointing, to staccato (voice pointing) reading, to a light stress of word breaks,

> and finally, to phrasing. ...Children who appear to 'read' fluently may not be visually responding to features in the print in any systematic or precise way. (p. 71)

It has become apparent, from the results of the observations made in this study that fluent reading-like behaviour provides one of the essential starting points from which young children can begin to master the task of learning to read. However, unless it is accompanied with the opportunity for them to become increasingly aware of the print on the page through a variety of experiences with written language, leading to the more precise eye-ear-voice matching techniques which allow the children to inspect the features of this print much more carefully, then fluent, reading-like behaviour may well lead to distorting the children's understanding of the processes involved in reading.

Unusual Print

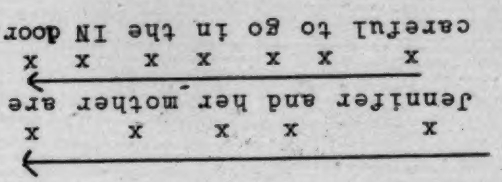
There were three tasks that had been included in the Reading Concepts Observational Scale which were designed primarily to check the children's degree of awareness of print. The first one consisted of a sentence of two lines, which had been printed upside down, as follows:

Jennifer and her mother are
careful to go in the IN door.

The children were first asked if there was anything wrong (later changed to 'different') on the page. If they indicated that the print was upside down they were asked to put it the right way up. With the print returned to the upside down position if necessary, they were then asked to point to the words as they were read.

Sean (3;3) and Jennifer (3;8) could find nothing wrong on the page, but Sean at 3 years 6 months pointed to the upside down 'N' in 'NI" and said its name. Kaaren (4;7) could not find anything wrong on the page but a month later immediately exclaimed, "Hey! they're upside down!" and proceeded to turn the book around so that they were the right way up. When asked to point to the words as they were read she did so very carefully starting on the bottom line and then going to the top, but she moved her finger from left to right on each line.

Gillian (5;7) immediately remarked, "Well the words are upside down," and turned the book so that they were the right way up. The book was then returned to its original position and she was asked if she could find the word 'IN'. She was offered the opportunity of turning the words the right way up but she commented, "No. I can do it upside down" and did so. When asked to point to the words as they were read she did so accurately, starting at the first word on the bottom right and moving from right to left for both lines, as indicated in the example:



(Started pointing here).

Although children seldom see print in an inverted position, this task does provide an indication of the degree of their awareness of the specific visual features of print. Kaaren (4;9) demonstrated that somehow, during the previous month of her life, she had become more aware of print, as she was able to see what was wrong immediately when given the task the second time. She had been engaged in a great deal of writing activity during the intervening period. She had been read to and had been 'reading' independently. So these activities probably contributed to her progress in being able to examine the print more carefully. In her pointing to the bottom line before the top line she indicated her awareness of which line would be read first which demonstrates a sophisticated level of thinking for a girl of this age. Probably because she was not yet attending to the features of the print, she pointed in the usual left to right direction.

Gillian (5;7) on the other hand, indicated complete control of the task. She not only saw what was wrong, but was able to recognize a word in the inverted print. Most importantly she was able to eye-ear-voice match exactly as the sentence was read to her. This would seem to indicate that she had developed quite an acute awareness of print and possessed a sufficiently flexible view of the task of "following along" to change her pointing strategy.

The second "unusual print" task involved checking the children's ability to see that there were no spaces between the words in the print on the page. Children's awareness of word boundaries has been the focus of a number of studies (Downing, 1972; Evans, 1974; Holden and MacGinitie, 1972; Huttenlocher, 1964; Karpova, 1966). The conclusion reached by these researchers indicated that young children's perception of the segments of speech does not correspond to their identification of the concepts of a "word" and a "sound". Studies by McNinch (1974) and Johns (1979) showed that children's perception of these concepts in print bore a significant relationship to their reading achievement when they were exposed to the current formal methods of instruction.

The task in the observational scale consisted of a sentence printed on a single line with the spaces between the words omitted, as follows:

Jenniferfindsthevanillaicecreaminthefreezer.

Initially they were asked if there was anything wrong on the page and then the words were read to them and they were asked the same question again.

None of the children could see anything wrong with the words either at the point of their initial inspection or when the line of print was read to them. Sean (3;6), however, on the second occasion the task was given to him, commented: "That's what's wrong with it. It's a long word." Gillian was given the task on three separate occasions; at 5 years 7 months, at 5 years 9 months and, at 5 years 11 months. On the first occasion she was quite definite that there was nothing wrong with the page. When asked as to how the girl in the picture who was selecting a carton of ice cream out of the supermarket freezer, knew how to pick her vanilla ice cream the following dialogue took place:

G: "Cos that's all white, and that's pink, and that says vanilla ice cream. (She points to the different cartons and then to the one with the almost indecipherable words "Vanilla Icecream" on the top).

I: Is there anywhere else you can find vanilla ice cream?
G: Right here. (Points to the sentence) In here.
I: Yes?
G: Hmm (Inspects the print very closely) va-nil-la ice-cream (Points to the words).
I: And there's nothing wrong with that page.
G: Nothing.

Even though she could not see that there were no spaces between the words, Gillian had little difficulty in finding the words "vanilla icecream", and having found them, still did not recognize the fact that they were not separated from other words by white spaces.

On the second occasion Gillian was directed to look very carefully at the print on the page and even pointed to it as the words were read to her, but the only thing that she thought was wrong was that the letter "J" was "around the wrong way", which of course it was not. Between this visit and the next one the mother reported in the Reading Log the following incident which appears to have been quite significant in Gillian's print awareness development:

> Apr. 6
>
> She (Gillian) picked up the book "Red Legs" and showed me Red, then mentioned "There's a space before Legs."

During this period the mother reported in the Reading Log that Gillian had been engaged in a great deal of writing, and had written several letters and cards to young friends. In all this writing she always allowed for spaces between the words. As well as reporting her writing behaviour, her mother recorded that on several occasions while Gillian was reading to herself, she would spell words out to her and ask what they were. Also, there were a number of observations recorded concerning the fact that the mother was sure that Gillian was actually reading. She appeared to be intent on the print and was constantly asking for words, even though she could have 'read' the stories from memory.

On the final visit, the "no spaces between the words" task was given to Gillian (5;11) again, with the following result:

G: Oh! They're not apart!
I: What's not apart?
G: The words. They're supposed to be apart 'cos
then you wouldn't know - They have to be
apart.
I: But why do they have to be apart?
G: 'Cos you can read them better.

The most significant aspect of Gillian's performances on this task, was not that she eventually saw that there were no spaces between the words but that, up to this point in her reading development, she had not realized, at a conscious level at least, that words used in written language had spaces between them. It should be remembered that this young girl had made great strides in her progress towards learning to read and was not only writing quite extensively but also appeared to be very near to reading independently. In her reading like behaviour for close to a year, she had been able to eye-ear-voice match with a high degree of accuracy. She could identify many individual words in context and could use initial cues to find words. And yet, up until the time when she drew her mother's attention to the space between the words "Red" and "Legs", apparently had not brought to a level of conscious awareness, the knowledge that she undoubtedly possessed, concerning the spaces between words.

Piaget (1976) in discussing the relationship between awareness and consciousness writes that:

> The results of cognitive functioning are relatively conscious, but the internal mechanisms are entirely, or almost entirely, unconscious. For example, the subject knows more or less what he thinks about a problem or an object; he is relatively sure of his beliefs. But though this is true of the results of his thinking, the subject is usually unconscious of the structures that guide his thinking. (p. 64)

Gillian, in the process that she had made in learning to read seems to have been relatively "unconscious of the structures that guided her thinking".

Reference has already been made to the views of linguists such as Cazden (1975) and Mattingly (1972, 1978, 1979) concerning the need for children to be metalinguistically aware of the concepts and processes involved in learning to read. Since learning to read is a secondary or derived language learning process, according to these linguists, it therefore has to be taught. Written language, they argue, has to be learned methodically, through direct instruction and the learners have to be able," ...to make language forms opaque and to attend to them in an for themselves" (Cazden, 1975, p. 4). On the other hand, the linguists claim oral language should be learned naturally, without formal instruction. What is being learned can (and should) remain in a transparent or out-of-awareness state.

Sufficient data have been presented already in this report, to demonstrate that preschool children can and do make considerable progress in learning written language without having to bring much of what they are learning to a level of conscious awareness. Nowhere was this more evident than in Gillian's out-of-awareness state with regard to her knowledge of the presence of spaces between words in her stories. The children's flexible use of the terms "word" and "letter" was another example of this.

The third "unusual print" task given to the children was the presenting of a page to them with "scribble" recorded in the same position as print would have been, as follows:

/½†#=& ÷+%‡[¶□□® ©• $!?/

†=#&⅓?:(□® •□%‡[¶!$/?÷+

The lady adds up the prices of all the groceries

The children were asked if they could see anything wrong (or different) on the page and then, if they indicated that they knew there were no words there, they were asked if they could find any. (The sentence was recorded in very small print at the bottom of the page).

Sean at 3 years 3 months could find nothing wrong on the page, but at 3 years 6 months said, as he pointed to the scribble, "Those aren't words". He could not however find any words on the page, but he did not look very hard.

Jennifer at 3 years 8 months responded to the questions in the following manner:

> J: Yeah (There is something wrong).
> I: What's wrong there.
> J: You can't see the letters. (Points to the scribble).
> I: You can't see the letters. You're quite right. They're not letters at all are they?
> J: No, they're squares.
> I: And what else.
> J: X's.
> I: Can you find any words on the page?
> J: Here's some words. (Points to the words at the bottom of the page).

It can be seen then that these two young children had become sufficiently print aware that they could recognize print-like scribble as not being words or letters and that Jennifer was able to recognize the legitimate print on the page.

At 4 years 7 months Kaaren immediately recognized that there were no words where the scribble was placed, but she observed that there were numbers on the page and wanted to know "...how much they are (were)." She stated that letters have to be on the page before the page could be read and then found some"letters"and "words" at the bottom of the page.

Gillian (5;7) responded to the question with, "Yeah! There's no words!" When asked if she could find any words on the page she pointed to the letters "c", "t" and "r" and named them. Asked were they words or letters, she replied, "Just letters". She found the words at the bottom of the page, became quite excited and pointed to them saying, "There's words! There's a "the". There's another "the", and there's "up". There's "of" and "all" (pointing to all these words correctly) a-a-a. I'm getting all mixed up!"

The task did not present any difficulties for these two girls and both were able to find the words on the page, with Gillian recognizing some of these. Kaaren saw that there were some numbers in the "scribble" which would indicate that she could discriminate between numbers and letters. Although Kaaren seemed still to be using the terms "word" and "letter" rather flexibly, Gillian appeared partially to have resolved that problem.

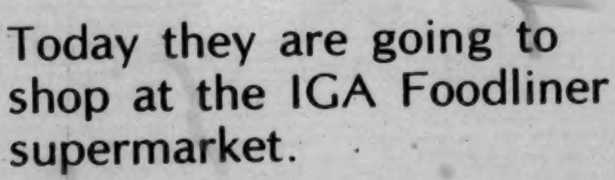
All three of these tasks provided further insight into the growth of these children's print awareness and in the case of Gillian in particular, gave evidence of a sophisticated level of development. Even the younger children had made progress in their ability to inspect visual information recorded on a page and realize that what was recorded was not in the form of the printed word.

Letter Form Generalizations

Children have to learn to categorize the visual information available to them from the page. This is no small task considering the amount of variation they are likely to meet in the print used in their story books. Clay (1972) comments on this problem by observing that:

> Upper and lower-case letters vary, cursive and printed scripts vary, type fonts vary. Overall, the visual constancy permitted and not permitted to each letter in the alphabet is arbitrary, capricious and illogical. (p. 145)

The task used to obtain some indication of the children's understanding of the sameness of upper case letters and their lower case counterparts, was made more difficult than it should have been by the use of an upper case "I" as one of the letters for which the lower case equivalent was to be found. The upper case "I" in the test booklet was the same as a lower case "l" as can be seen in the page that was used for the task:



Today they are going to shop at the IGA Foodliner supermarket.

The children were asked to find another letter just like the one pointed to by the administrator. In order to try and overcome the "I" and the "l" problem, they were asked if they knew the name of the letters and if they did not, they were told the name.

At 3 years 3 months the task was beyond Sean, although he found the letters "a", "e", "s" and "n" on the page, these being the letters in his name of course. At 3 years

6 months he still could not find any lower case equivalents, but he was able to name the three upper case letters, "I", "G" and "A", and then found them in the photograph of the supermarket.

Jennifer (3;8) found the "I" on the photograph also, and then proceeded to find its equivalent in the word "going" saying, "There it is, with the little round dot." She knew the letter name for "G" but could not find its lower case equivalent. She did point to a "t" with the comment, "That's not a "g". That's a "t" so at least she knew a letter that was not a "g". The letter "A" gave her no trouble and she found "a's" in "today", "at" and "are".

Kaaren(4;7) first of all found a lower case "l" for the equivalent of the "I" but when she was asked the name of the upper case "I" she gave it and immediately found lower case "i's". Like Jennifer, she knew the name of the "G" but could not find any lower case equivalents. The "A" gave her no trouble. Gillian(5;7) like Kaaren experienced the same difficulty with the "I" and the "l" and resolved it in the same way. The other two letters presented her with no difficulty.

Although this task sampled very little of these children's knowledge of letter correspondences it gave sufficient information to realize that all of them, except Sean, had begun to develop systems for categorizing letters by their name rather than shape. Both Jennifer and Kaaren almost always used upper case letters in their printing but Gillian used a mixture. A later experience showed Kaaren could produce lower case letters as well and called this "adult writing". The parents of all the children had given them assistance when they requested it in learning to print the various letters and all of them had magnetic upper-case letters on their refrigerator doors. The television programme, Sesame Street, was seen as a source of learning about "big" and "little" letters for all of these children by the parents.

Despite the limited range of the information obtained, it did provide yet another indication of the manner in which these children,at a very early age, begin to master yet another quite complex task related to written language.

Children's Concepts of Reading and Learning to Read

The main source of the data for what children understood about the process of reading and, as a result of their experience, how they thought they might go about the task of learning to read, came from the use of the Reading Concepts Questionnaire and the Favourite Book Questionnaire. The questions were seldom posed in a formal and continuous manner, but were usually interspersed throughout a shared book session with each child. Some of the questions were asked on several occasions during the period of study, to see if any change was occurring in the children's beliefs. The repeating of these questions, it was realized, may well have cued the children to the type of response that they thought they should make, rather than responding to the question according to their own understanding.

The main objective of asking the questions was not to assess the children's specific knowledge of what was involved in the process of reading and learning to read, but to gain further insight as to how and why their understanding of these processes were developing. Although the words used by the children may not indicate the results of all the experiences, they have had in the area of reading, as Marsh (1970) observes, "Much valuable material has come to hand by attempting to understand the use of language by children" (p. 2).

When the children were asked, after they had 'read' part of one of their favourite stories, were they reading their stories or telling their stories, they all stated that they were reading their stories. Kaaren (4;8) knew what to say and said "Because there's the pictures and that reminds me (her emphasis) and I can see the words." Later during the same session, she observed that we knew what to say when we were reading, "Because you can see the pictures. If there weren't even pictures you won't know what the word says—not even if you had glasses!" Gillian (5;5) stated that she knew what to say "Because my mummy showed me and I remembered the words," while Jennifer, who, at 3 years 5 months had said that she used the pictures to help her, at 3 years 10 months thought that the words told us what to say, and pointed to some of them on a page in her book. In Sean's (3;4) case he stated quite positively that, "There's words down this page. That's how we know" and when questioned again later during the same session, as to "How do I know what to say when I read this book?" he pointed to a word and said "'Cos of this here." When the investigator pointed to a line of print and asked, "Is this what tells me?", Sean then moved his finger all over the page of print saying, "No. Because all of this tells you."

In order to check their understanding of what they do when they read, the children were asked if it was possible to "read with your eyes closed?" Sean (3;4) was quite sure that it was not possible because, "Then you can't see the pages." When asked what was on the pages that we have got to see in order to read he replied, "The pictures." At 3 years 10 months Jennifer answered the question by saying, "No. 'Cos you can't see the pictures." On being asked if there was anything else that could not be seen she replied, "I can't see the letters and the numbers."

Despite the fact that both of these children had indicated that words have to be looked at in order to read, when questioned on the topic rather more obliquely, they demonstrated that their understanding of the process was not the conventional one. The fact that they had answered initially by saying that words were needed for reading, could have been the result of their parents telling them from time to time that they had to look at the words in order to read. On the other hand it could have been an example of the observation made in the introduction to this section concerning the children giving the answer that they thought was expected of them. An explanation more in keeping with the way in which they were developing their understanding of the various concepts and processes involved in reading would be that their thinking in this area was still extremely flexible and their views would go on changing until they had traversed all the intervening steps necessary to establish an adequate grasp of what they have to do as they read.

Kaaren (4;8) who was also quite flexible in her thinking about the role of the text in a story, expressed a very clear understanding of the difference between reading a story and telling a story. The following is the transcript of a discussion she had with the investigator when she made an unsolicited comment concerning Sean's reading ability:

K: Sean does not know how to read yet.
I: How do you know he does not know?
K: He knows how to read "Meg on the Moon" and "Did you Ever See?"
I: Yes, and he also read through this story. What's the name of this story?
K: My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes.

I: Do you think he was reading the story?
K: Yes.
I: Or do you think he was telling the story from memory - remembering the story.
K: He was telling the story.
I: What's the difference between telling the story and reading the story?
K: Telling the story means you're not (her emphasis) looking at the book. Reading the story means that you are looking at the book.
I: What are you looking at in the book when you're reading?
K: Words.

But on the visit to their home five days previously, Kaaren had been asked the question concerning reading with the eyes closed and the following interaction took place:

I: Could I read that story (My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes) with my eyes closed?
K: Yes.
I: I can't.
K: I'll help you.
I: You help me (Investigator closes his eyes).
K: A cat from Norway (Kaaren 'reads').
I: A cat from Norway
K: Got stuck in the doorway (Kaaren continues to read).
I: Got stuck in the doorway.
(The echo reading continued for four more lines).
I: I had my eyes closed but I wasn't reading because I couldn't see the words. You were telling me the words.
K: You were just thinking about the words.

Kaaren was asked the same question on the next visit, just after she had given the explanation of the difference between reading and telling a story, and cheerfully remarked "Let's try!". She then attempted to read a page she had not seen of My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes with her eyes closed. The investigator opened the book at a page, after she had closed her eyes and she proceeded to 'read' with the following results:

K: A cat from Spain. Flies an aeroplane.
I: Now open your eyes. What does it say on the page?
K: My cat likes to hide in boxes. ('Reads' correctly)
I: So you opened your eyes and what did you see on the page that told you what to read?
K: (Points to the pictures).
I: What tells you what to say? What is more important on that page as far as reading is concerned. Is it the picture or the words? (A good example of the investigator giving a clear indication to Kaaren what she should say).
K: Words.
I: Why are words more important for reading?
K: Because they say something.
I: Does the picture say anything?
K: (Ignoring the question). Letters are important and words make letters important.

Immediately after this discussion, she was asked if the investigator could read the same book when it was closed and she was quite positive that he could. She instructed him to close his eyes and then proceeded to help him 'read' it again. When he told her that he could not read it, and she was asked why this was so, she replied: "Because you forgot" (the words). Two months later, Kaaren (4;10) was asked the same questions again, and was still convinced that it was possible to read with the eyes or the book closed. On being asked earlier in the session whether she looked at the pictures or at the words when she was reading she replied, "I look at the words."

Comment was made in a previous section of this report on how Kaaren still did not seem to be attending to the print as she engaged in reading-like behaviour, even by the conclusion of the visits, despite her almost daily production of written material. Her mother possibly was not assisting her greatly in developing her understanding of what she had to do with regard to the print on the page when reading, with the following comments made to Kaaren (4;10) concerning the way she actually did read:

> M: We don't read it (the book they were reading together) the same way do we?
> K: No. Mommy reads the words.
> M: Do you read the words or do you sometimes make the words up?
> K: I make some up.

Like the two younger children then, Kaaren had not established a firm understanding of where to look and what to look at on the page, and still held a rather flexible view of what she should do when she 'read' her stories. Since the procedure she was using had served her needs moderately well up until this stage, there was no point in trying another way. As will be seen later in this section, however, the signs of her growing need for independence were beginning to emerge which could provide the motivation for the need to learn new strategies to deal with her stories.

At 4 years 6 months, Gillian thought she could not read a story with her eyes closed, "'Cos I'm too young for that. 'Cos I'm four years old." She thought that the investigator could have done so however, and also that he could read a book when it was closed. She did know how he might have done that. When asked at this stage, if she could read any stories, she was confident that she could read the Three Little Kittens, although she had demonstrated to the investigator that she could also 'read' a great number of her Disney Club Books, but not as accurately or as independently as the Three Little Kittens.

When asked at 5 years 7 months what books she could read she gave her "Kitten" book as one, and added Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer and My Big Book of Pretty Pussies. Again it was known that she could 'read', with perhaps a lesser degree of accuracy, many of the books in her library. It was at this time she demonstrated some uncertainty as to whether she could read or not with a "No - Yeah" response to the question, and then indicating later that she thought that she could not read, "Because I can't read my Charlie Brown book yet" meaning either, that she could not read it by staying with the print or that she could not 'read' it through reading-like behaviour. When asked by the investigator, after fluently 'reading' part of My Big Book of Pretty Pussies, if she thought she could learn to read by practicing like that, the following dialogue took place:

G: Hm. Hmm (Yes)
I: What are you doing?
G: Pointing to the words.

I: So you're reading? Are you reading when
   you're doing that?
G: Well not very much (in a rather resigned
   tone of voice).
I: Not very much?
G: Nope. Not very much.

Gillian's ambivalence concerning whether she could read or not was probably the result of her growing awareness of the print being on the page. The fact that she would name only those books that she knew very well as the ones that she could 'read', was perhaps another indication of the uncertainty she felt at this time. This uncertainty was still being expressed by her at 5 years 11 months when, in reply to the question asking if she could read yet, she replied, "Yeah, but I can't - If you read this (pointing to a book) I'll try and read it after you." It was as if she was saying, "I can't read it your way, but I'll try to read it my way" which of course was similar to the view that Kaaren had of the way that she read.

On other occasions however, Gillian (5;7) indicated very clearly that she thought that she was reading. The following rather lengthy series of transcripts have been included because they provide an interesting insight into this little girl's view of the process of reading. As these transcripts are examined it should be remembered that Gillian had been brought up in a book-oriented home, and had probably spent several thousand hours in the company of books since her first nursery rhyme was read to her when she was

4 months old. She had received very little formal instruction in reading and writing, but had already built up quite an extensive sight vocabulary and at times, engaged in both finger and voice pointing as she retrieved her favourite stories through reading-like behaviour. She had a growing writing vocabulary which she used, along with her mother's help, to write letters, cards of various kinds and thank you notes. She could isolate letters and words on request, could find first and last letters in words and had complete control over the letter names of the alphabet, both upper and lower case. On occasions however, when asked to count the words in a line of print, she would count the letters, although the reverse of this never occurred. She had also brought to the level of conscious awareness at least, the recognition of the fact that words were separated with white spaces on the page.

Gillian had just 'read' several verses from My Big Book of Pretty Pussies and the transcripts of some of this 'reading' was recorded in the previous section of this chapter. She was asked if she could read with her eyes closed and she stated confidently that she could, closed her eyes tightly, and proceeded to 'read' the next verse in the book as follows, and was then questioned as to what she was doing:

Text	Gillian
The wind blows on the window pane.	The wind blows on the window pane.

Text	Gillian
The rain falls on	The rain falls on
the ground.	the ground.
I think I'll go	I think I'll go
and have some tea.	and have some tea.
Then read this book	Then read this book
I've found.	I've found.

I: Are you reading when you are doing that?
Are you reading? (No response from G.).
Or are you just saying the words aloud?
G: Just saying the words, 'cos if I point,
I get all mixed up!

Here we see Gillian 'reading' with fluency, accuracy and considerable expression, but with her eyes tightly closed. Her reference to "getting all mixed up" was the result of her problem with her pointing at the beginning of the previous verse, where the two-syllable word "tankard" had caused her to stop finger pointing. She seems to equate real reading with finger pointing. The questioning then continued:

I: Can I read those words with my eyes closed?
G: Try! (The investigator closes his eyes).
I: I can't.
G; Why?
I: Why can't I read those words with my eyes closed?
G: I don't know.
I: Can I see the words?
G: No. (Uncertainty in her voice) No.
I: I can't read that page. (The investigator then places his finger on the right hand side of the page, still with his eyes closed).
G: Wait! You're pointing at the end, not the beginning.
I: Where do I point?
G: Here. I'll help you. (Gillian took the investigator's hand and placed his finger on the first word at the beginning of the line).
I: Where is it?
G: Right here.
I: Can I see the word?

G: No. It says, it's - T-h-e (spells the word).
I: All right. That says 'the' O.K.
G: Next it's w-i-n-b-d.
Will you open your eyes! (with considerable frustration).

Although she knows that the investigator could not see the words because his eyes were closed, Gillian reasoned that if she helped him point to the words he should be able to read them. Failing that, the only other way to help him without actually 'reading' the words for him, was to spell them, which she proceeded to do. The discussion then continued as follows:

I: Can I see the words?
G: No! Will you open your eyes now!
I: But I want to read it, You told me I could read it with my eyes closed. (Investigator opened his eyes). Can you read it with your eyes closed. (Gillian nodded her head indicating that she could). Do I have to be able to see that (pointed to the words), to be able to read?
G: No.
I: I don't? (surprise expressed).
G: Ah well, I didn't!
I: Were you reading if you weren't seeing it?
G: Yes. I was reading it (Very positive).
I: Were you?
G: That's what it says! (expressed righteously).

It can be seen that Gillian was still quite certain that since she was able to say accurately what was on the page, then she must be able to read the page. She could see no reason at this stage why the investigator should not be able to do so as well. He demonstrated that he could read the words on the page with his eyes open and then asked:

I: Do you have to be able to see the words to
be able to read?
G; No. No, I don't. You do.
I: I do? Why do I have to be able to see the
words to be able to read?
G: 'Cos you never saw the book before.
I: That's quite right. But you know the story
don't you?
G: Yes.
I: So what do you have to do with the story?
G: I can read with my eyes closed.
I: Uh huh. And are you reading when you're
saying the words with your eyes closed?
G: Yes! (Becoming frustrated).

She then said that she could read the book when it was closed, but soon found herself in difficulty and opened the book. When asked why she had to that she remarked, "Have to look up the words." She proceeded immediately to 'read' page after page of her book, fluently and with varying degrees of accuracy.

In can be seen then the Gillian was operating probably on the basis of two views of the process of reading. Despite all of her experience with written language, she was quite happy with her firmly established understanding that reading involved retrieving her stories through the use of reading-like behaviour, since this in fact was how she had been learning to read, with a considerable amoung of success so far. It was not difficult to see how this view of reading had developed. Reference has been made already to her stating at 5 years 4 months that she had learned to 'read' a story by her mother showing her (reading to her) and she then remembered the words. At the conclusion of that same session she was asked if the investigator could read the story they were looking at together, and she agreed that he could. The following discussion then took place:

I: How could I read the story?
G: "'Cos you listen to the words.
I: Do I read the words or listen to the words?
G: Listen to the words.

During a visit made two months later Gillian (5;6) was asked how she had learned a story that she had just read, and replied, "Well they (her parents) keep reading it to me and I keep following it". At 5 years 7 months she was 'reading' her personalized book. Bambi, Thumper and Me to the investigator and had 'read' and pointed accurately to a sentence in the story. She was congratulated on her skill at reading so well, to which she replied, "I'm just looking at the words, but I just remember them." Here she seems to be saying that she was aware that the words were on the page and that she knew that she should be able to use them in her reading, but at the moment she still had to rely on her memory for them.

The following transcript gives an even clearer illustration of the view that Gillian (5;7) held of reading being something you learn through listening. She had just been asked if she wanted to learn how to read, and she made a comment about her cat and dog and reading, and was asked for clarification of what she meant:

I: How are they (the cat and the dog) going
to help you learn to read?
G: No! I can teach them.
I: Teach your cat and dog to read (expressed
some surprise).
G: Yeah. 'Cos Smokey (the dog) I - when I ask
her to - When I say "Smokey!" she just -
she just sits. And I say "Smokey!" (as if
she is giving the dog an order).
I: But is she learning to read if you do that?
Is she reading? (Two different questions
unfortunately).
G: No.
I: Do you think Smokey can learn to read
these words?
G: If I only tell her! (Her emphasis).

Not only can Gillian learn to read by hearing the words read to her over and over again, but because her dog has demonstrated an ability to understand oral language in the form of orders, she too can learn to read. All that Gillian had to do was say the words to her over and over again.

In line with Gillian's (5;7) understanding of what she had to do when she reads and how she could go about learning, was her view of the difficulty of the learning task. When asked whether learning to read would be easy or hard, she responded enthusiastically with, "Easy! So easy!" When asked why it would be easy, she replied with a certain nonchalance, "Well I just do it". Which was the way she had learned to read, according to her view of the process. She had access to a great number of favourite stories which she could retrieve for herself as accurately as she needed to whenever she wished to. She had learned to 'read' her stories without any conscious effort on her part and through a constantly repeated, totally enjoyable, shared experience with one of her parents. So the process of learning was in no way difficult; in fact, it was extremely pleasurable and simple.

Two months later however, a change in Gillian's (5;9) attitude towards learning to read was reported by the mother in the Reading Log. She recorded that they were sitting listening to a number of new story records and following along in the accompanying books, when Gillian made the comment that she "...was not interested in learning to read - it's too much work!". The reasons for this change became apparent to the investigator as Gillian's understanding of the process of reading was examined again through questioning, through the mother's observations, and through direct observation of her reading-like behaviour. Whereas, up until this time she had been comfortable with her view of reading as essentially a process of reconstructing the story, which she had found an enjoyable and simple task. She was now becoming increasingly aware that the print played a very important role in reading.

At 5 years 10 months Gillian was asked if it were possible to read with your eyes closed and replied with a firm "No!". When asked why this was so she stated with equal firmness, "'Cos you can't see the words!". She was then asked as to why she was able to read her book, My Big Book of Pretty Pussies with her eyes closed and she gave her reason as, "...that's because I knew the verses well." When asked a month later if she could tell the investigator what she did as she read she gave the following description:

> G: Look at the words. No. Look at the pictures. Here (Pointed to the print and pictures on a page of a book) I can see both the words and the pictures.
> I: If I cover those words down there, can you read them?
> G: You've got to see the words.

An examination of the mother's Reading Log for this period revealed numerous comments concerning Gillian's apparent efforts to locate words that she knew and to actually read her stories. The following are some examples of her entries:

> Mar. 31
>
> Tonight more stories from their Bible Book. ...Gill. went through the first story locating words she knows - as, God, the, etc.
>
> Apr. 2
>
> ...She initiated the reading of a prayer in one story. Went through (pointing with her finger) pointing out all the words she recognized. I assisted with others which she recognized on a second appearance.
>
> Apr.11
>
> Picked up a book this a.m. and proceeded to read out all the words she knew.
>
> May 23
>
> Gill dragged out about 8 to 10 Disney books to 'read' by herself this a.m. asking me the difficult words. She continues to read instead of memorizing!

May 25

She bounced out of bed early today (8 a.m.) and proceeded to read two books to me .... She read Whose Mouse Are You? and Where the Wild Things Are, spelling out any words she didn't know and asked what they were. She's actually reading, isn't she?

May 27

At breakfast today Gill read Morris the Moose with help from Greg again. She's definitely reading each word - looks very intent.

It is not difficult to see that Gillian's understanding of what you have to do when you read was changing quite dramatically. Along with this change came alteration of her view as to whether learning to read was going to be easy or hard. When asked this question at 5 years 11 months the following was her emphatic response:

G: Hard!
I: Why is it going to be hard?
G: Because I don't know very much of the words.
I: But you know a lot of words.
G: I know, except, you know - 'munication and stuff like that. I don't even know how to spell communication!

Whereas Gillian's (5;7) view of learning to read had initially been that it would be an easy task because of the amount of repeated readings of favourite stories she has experienced, Kaaren's (4;8) view was rather different. It should be remembered that she had not experienced nearly the same amount of repeated readings of favourite stories in both quantity and regularity as Gillian had. Because of this she had relatively few stories that she could retrieve for herself independently. Also,due to the fact that she heard her favourite stories read very irregularly, learning to 'read' then became a more difficult process for Kaaren. There was also a fairly strong indication on the part of the parents, that when she did engage in reading-like behaviour that she should 'read' the story accurately. There was a tendency then for them to correct her when she miscued in her'reading.' When asked if she thought learning to read would be easy or hard, she was quite certain that it would be "Hard, because you might forget how to read." A little earlier, in this session when she had been asked what she thought she might have to do to learn to read better than she could at the moment, she replied, "Learn to read more stories. But when you're out you may forget how to read some stories."

It is not difficult to see how Kaaren's irregular experience with repeatedly read stories may well have influenced her view of learning to read. Because she still saw the process as one of remembering the story (or the words) and this was something that she had not been terribly successful at doing, it was not only going to be laborious task in the future, it was a demanding one now. When she was asked at 4 years 10 months if she wanted to read better than she was able to now she replied with a positive, "No!". When asked "Why not?", she answered, "'Cos it would take too long. I would keep forgetting," which of course is exactly what she was doing because of her irregular, repeatedly read story experiences.

Gillian and Kaaren saw the task of learning to read as something that was going to be difficult, but their opinions were based on different reasons, resulting from their different experiences. They were both rather similar however, in their moving towards wanting to read independently. Just as Sartre (1964) had become jealous of his mother and resolved to take her role away from her, (because she was able to read and was always reading to him), these girls seemed to be moving in the same direction.

At 5 years 6 months, when Gillian was asked if she wished she could read all the words she uttered a very meaningful sigh accompanied by a drawn out "Yeah!". Unfortunately her answer to the question "Why?" was not fully decipherable but started with "Because when we both read I've got to - ." She seemed to be saying that she had to follow along all the time and could only read what someone had read to her. Three months later, when her mother was commenting on Gillian's (5;9) 'reading' of My Big Book of Pretty Pussies, she reported that Gillian would resist any assistance with a "Don't tell me! Don't tell me!" and then, if she came to a word she could not remember she would ask for it, but immediately say, "Now don't tell me anymore!".

During the last visit to Gillian's (5;11) home, the investigator was reading Sendak's, Where the Wild Things Are to her. This was only the second time that she had heard the story, but she was participating fully by finishing lines, by echo reading and occasionally by starting to 'read' a new line or page. After a few pages had been read in this manner Gillian interrupted the investigator's reading and using almost an authoritative tone, stated "You've got to let me read now!". It was during this same visit that she made a comment that, "Sometimes I like to read by myself."

One of the first indications that Kaaren (4;9) wanted to be more independent in her reading occurred when she and her mother were reading Moffat's A Flower Pot is Not a Hat together. She had been trying to 'read' it to her mother, but the mother kept coming in with words too soon and finally Kaaren, in a very loud voice cried out in sheer frustration, "Don't help me read!". With that, her mother stopped "helping" and Kaaren continued on 'reading' successfully. A month later she was asked if she would like to be helped to learn to read, and she made the following observation:

K: No. I wouldn't.
I: Why wouldn't you?
K: ' Cos I'd like to learn with no one teaching me. Just like for instance I learnt a story all by myself today.
I: How did you do that?
K: I just tried to remember what Mummy and Daddy said.
I: And then you could read it?
K: Yeah.

Although both of these girls had, through their comments and actions, expressed a desire to be able to read independently, they were, because of their different experiences and views of the process of reading going about achieving this goal in different ways. Kaaren (4;10) was now beginning quite deliberately to learn to retrieve a story for herself, by listening very carefully as one of her parents read it to her. Reading for Kaaren was still a process of trying to remember the words, using the pictures to stimulate her recall. It was still possible, in her view, to read with your eyes closed. Gillian (5;11) however, was certain now, that it was not possible to read without looking at the words on the page, although she still saw the pictures as being very important. She had embarked on a process of learning to read by making much more use of the visual information on the page, and although she was finding the task a difficult and demanding one, this did not seem to deter her from trying to master it, despite the fact that she saw it as " ...too much work."

Another problem that very young children may experience in developing a drive towards achieving independence in reading was revealed in the case of Jennifer. Her mother reported that when Jennifer was approximately 3 years 3 months old, she demonstrated that, up until this stage of her development, she had thought that children could not learn to read. The mother reported the following observation during the initial interview conducted with her. She stated that:

> Only a while ago she [Jennifer] realized that children could read too. Up till then she thought only adults could read the words. I brought a little friend of hers over one afternoon - Nicky, who is in Grade 4, and she sat down and read a whole pile of books. Before that she was convinced that children didn't read only big people did.

Although the problem obviously was not a difficult one to overcome, for some children who do not have older siblings in their family, and who never get to see other children reading, it is possible that the viewing of reading as an adult task may well persist until they go to school. The development of any intrinsically motivated drive towards achieving independence in reading would therefore be similarly delayed.

Perhaps the clearest view of how and why these changes were occurring was observed in Gillian's behaviour. Here we saw one firmly held view of the process of reading and how it was learned, being replaced gradually by another. Gillian was moving from her securely held view that learning to read was essentially a process of listening carefully and remembering what was said through a growing ambivalence, to a gradual realization that reading involved using the print on the page to assist in the task.

With that change came a change in the strategies Gillian was using in order to retrieve her stories for herself and an understanding that reading involved much more than just "remembering the words." And with that change came a change in the way she viewed the difficulty of the process. Reading became something that was going to be hard to learn, so overwhelming in its apparent complexity that she no longer felt that she wanted to try. But the thousands of hours of pleasure she had obtained through books, the success she had experienced so far, the inner drive to master the task, the knowledge and skill that she had developed through her written language experiences, and finally the emergence of a need to be able to read, independent of others, kept her at the task, experimenting, approximating and self-directing most of her own learning.

The other children's understanding of reading and how it was to be learned were changing also, but seemingly not as obviously or as rapidly as Gillian's and this was a significant outcome of the examination of the data presented here. Children need time to broaden their understanding of reading and how it is learned. But even more important, they need a vaste amount of experience with books and written language of various kinds, so that they can not only grow in their understanding of the processes involved, but can also develop effective and efficient strategies for dealing with them. The results of the quality and quantity of Kaaren's experiences with books for example, affected her understanding of the processes involved in reading, her attitude to the task of learning, and the strategies that she employed in learning to 'read.'

Environmental Language, Writing and the Functions of Written Language

If children are to become competent users of written language, in the same way as they become competent users of oral language, the written language they use and the way in which they use it, has to serve their purposes and has to become strongly functional for them.

Although Halliday (1975), in the following observation, was referring to children's oral language development, his comments appear directly relevant as well, to their written language development. He writes:

> ...once the interest is focused on how the child learns a system of meanings this points to some investigation in functional terms. It becomes necessary to look beyond the language itself, but to do so without presupposing a particular conceptual framework, because this is precisely what the child is using language to construct; and herein lies the value of a functional approach. Early language development may be interpreted as the child's progressive mastery of a functional potential. (p. 242)

The wide experience that the children involved in this study were obtaining with their books was providing them constantly with access to all the functions of language in operation that Halliday (1975, p. 244) describes. But as Holdaway (1979) suggests:

> It is not only listening to stories that is important in this sense: probably of greater importance is the way children enter into the world expressively [Holdaway's emphasis] as they repeat, re-enact, read again or live out in many expressive modes the story language which fulfils multiple functions in their experience. (p. 149)

The added experience with a tremendous variety of language that these children were obtaining through their nursery rhymes, poems and stories of all kinds, provided them with a greatly increased opportunity to 'learn how to mean' (Halliday, 1975).

The data reported in this section however, examines other sources of experience with written language to which these children were exposed. In particular, their knowledge and understanding of the use of environmental language was studied through the use of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale and by taking three of the children out into the streets to determine the extent of their awareness of the language to be found there. Observations were also made of their reactions to books which had print that was featured in some particular functional way, other than simply recording a story in continuous prose. The use of their games that required some learning of written language, their children's magazines which contained various word puzzles and games and their understanding of some of the purposes of magazines and newspapers, were all examined briefly. Finally the role of their writing activity in developing their awareness functions of written language was also briefly explored.

There is no shortage of written language being used in our environment. As Smith (1978) suggests:

> For those not blind to it (which experienced readers are inclined to be), our visual world is frequently festooned with print, most of it (check your supermarket) literally right in front of our eyes. The question is, whether children who cannot yet read pay very much attention to it. (p. 93)

Smith's question is an important one to consider when examining children's specific knowledge of the language contained in the signs, logos and labels which are present in their environment. For example, when Gillian (5;9) recognized the "Esso" gas station sign as the investigator was driving her around the streets, the following discussion took place:

G: That says Esso. Esso.
I: How do you know that's Esso?
G: Because Daddy goes to it.
I: But how do you know it's Esso?
G: Because it has a blue ring around it. (The Esso sign has a blue ring around the word).
I: Is there anything else that tells you that's Esso?
G: No. Because I can't see. That "Ɛ's" in the way. (The "Ɛ" was seen by Gillian as a **3**).
I: How do you spell - What are the letters in it?
G: I don't know because there's "**3**", and "S". and "S" and then "O".

Later, on the same expedition, Gillian was taken to a local supermarket, along with the tape recorder, and her knowledge of the names of a stack of approximately 20 Disney story records, with their accompanying books was checked. She could correctly name every one of them, and when asked whether she was looking at the words or the pictures, her description of what she did not only provides an indication of her honesty when being questioned in this manner, but also how careful checks have to be made of children's responses to environmental language. Gillian replied:

> G: Looking at the pictures.
> I: How did you know all those words, the names of those records?
> G: 'Cos I know them. 'Cos I'm looking at the pictures. Then I know them.
> I: Do you ever look at the words?
> G: No.
> I: You just look at the pictures?
> G: Yeah. Then it tells me.

As she was 'reading' the titles, she was asked to point to some such as Winnie the Pooh, Davey Crockett and Hansel and Gretel. She was able to eye-ear-voice match exactly with all of them, but notwithstanding her ability to do this, chose to recognize them through the pictures rather than the words.

Despite this indication that Gillian did not always attend to the words and letters in her 'reading' of environmental language, she provided plenty of other examples that demonstrated that on many occasions she did. During the final observational visit she was 'reading' (and was reading much of it) Three Little Kittens to the investigator and she had come to "shall" in "And then you shall have no pie." Instead of going back and taking a rerun at it as she was prone to do, she paused for a long time, and then finally said "shall." When asked how she knew, she replied, "I knew "shall" because 'Shell' is a gas station." Although the

the medial vowels were different, she had used the features of the word she had seen many times in the environment that she had in memory, to stimulate the recall of the unknown word.

From the use of the Reading Concepts Observational Scale it was found that Gillian (5;7) could use the word "calendar" correctly and knew what a calendar was used for. She knew where the names for the days of the week were located and pointed to the word Monday when asked to find it, even though the print in the picture was very indistinct. As soon as the observer began to question her concerning the calendar, she rushed out of the room to change the day indicator on a large calendar which her parents had made for her, so it was not difficult to determine the source of her knowledge here.

When asked the various questions concerning the writing of the grocery list, it was found that Gillian knew and could use the word "list" correctly. She knew also that the mother was writing the list so that "she won't forget what she's getting."

Her knowledge of environmental language was found to be comprehensive. She recognized the 'STOP' sign, knew its purpose, and found the word within the sentence. She knew what the gas station sign was used for, but could not recognize the word 'IRVING', although she did recognize the sign for 'ICE' which had no context to support it.

Gillian was able to find the 'IN' and 'OUT' signs on the doors in her response to the question asking how the people knew which door to use, and her knowledge of the labels on the various items in the supermarket was accurate. For example, as already mentioned in a previous section, she was able to distinguish between the words 'Coke' and 'Coca Cola', and was also able to find 'vanilla ice cream' in the sentence with no spaces between the words. When asked how the girl in the picture knew which cereal to select from all the varieties on the shelves, she pointed to the words on the packet and said, "Because they have these on (pointed to the words). It says, R-Rice-Rice-Krispies" and ran her finger along under the words. That was a very different response to the one she made to a similar question at 4 years 6 months, when she stated that were were no words on the box of their favourite cereal, only "squares" and "Winnie the Pooh."

While on the drive around her city, Gillian (5;9) demonstrated a wide ranging knowledge of the various signs that littered the environment, although the cues that she utilized for this recognition were not always checked. She knew all the fast food outlets, and identified the other signs such as 'NO PARKING.' When asked how she recognized these, she spelled them out. The word 'TAXI' was identified however, because she had a toy taxi at home with the word on it and somehow, she recognized the name of the film that was showing at the local cinema. It was 'Saturday Night Fever' which she identified as 'Saturday Night' with a request to her mother to be taken to it.

Taken to a drug store, Gillian was able to recognize toothpaste labels such as 'Crest,' 'Aim' and 'Colgate' ("Because we use that one"), various brands of soap and a number of the other items such as 'Cuetips', 'Scope', and the brands of cat and dog food with which her pets were fed. In the toy section of a large department store she was able to correctly identify a vast array of toys. When asked as to how she recognized many of them as she proceeded around the display, it was found that she used a variety of techniques: "By the words" , "Well I can tell by looking at the pictures", "I don't know. I just got it in my head." On one occasion she used initial letter cues as was demonstrated by the following dialogue:

G: Charlie Brown (pointing correctly) Linus
I: No, that's not Linus. The next one might be.
G: Yes. Linus. Lucy (pointing correctly) Peppermint Paddy (pointing correctly)
I: How do you know?
G: 'Cos that's the only one that starts with "P". Snoopy (pointing correctly)
I: How do you know it's Snoopy?
G: 'Cos. Right here (pointing to the word).

Neither of Gillian's parents could give any specific reasons for her wide-range of knowledge of environmental language. As previously reported, the father had commented on her interest in the various road signs and he had told her what a number of those were and both parents had commented on the children's great interest in television commercials. They thought that this latter source of information, along with her incidental learning whilst out shopping or driving in the family car were probably the main sources of her learning. They were surprised at the extent of her knowledge since they had never attempted to help her learn all this information in a systematic way.

The amount of information obtained from Jennifer(3;8) concerning her knowledge of environmental language and its function, was much more limited than with Gillian, as she was not taken on a drive around the streets. From the observational scale however, it was found that she knew the word for 'calendar' but was not sure what it was used for. When asked if there was anything on the calendar that might tell that it was 'Monday' she pointed to the numbers and started counting. She pointed in a random manner but counted from 1 to 27. With regard to the picture of the mother writing down her shopping list, she initially thought they were "Reading the list" (which is a legitimate response) but then, on seeing the second picture decided that were "Writing it down to see what she needs."

Jennifer recognized the 'STOP' sign and knew what the cars had to do because of it, but could not find the word in the context. She knew the gas station sign for what it was but could not recognize the word on it. Jennifer could not find the 'IN' sign on the door but did point to the 'OUT' sign and said, "That says "Go out." She did not know that the brand name on the cereal told the little girl which one to select, andpointed to the picture in response to the question. She pointed generally to theice cream carton when asked a similar question concerning that.

The mother reported that on three occasions Jennifer (3;6), (3;6), 3;10) had asked her to read all the words on the main label of their cereal box, which she did. In a previous section it was recorded that Jennifer could recognize the signs for all the major fast food outlets in the area, and had been particularly interested in 'Kentucky Fried Chicken.' The mother also reported how Jennifer (3;10) hunted for all the 'STOP' signs one day when they were out walking, and would stop and spell the word out on each occasion. The parents commented on her interest in television commercials for toys and how she could always recognize these subsequently in the store. They thought that her identification was more from the picture than the words however. It can be seen then that Jennifer was beginning to develop an awareness of the language of the environment and knew the purpose for some of it.

Kaaren's (4;6) responses to the observational scale tasks demonstrated a similar level of understanding to that of Gillian's but she was not as aware of the print, as Gillian had been. When asked how the calendar told them what day of the week it was, she pointed to the number 16 rather than to the words across the top. The list and its function presented no problems and she was able to find the word 'stop' in the context of the sentence. She was uncertain concerning the 'IN' sign on the door and could not point to it specifically but pointed to the word 'OUT' and said "That says 'out door'" when the task was given to her. The girl in the picture knew that the cereal was 'Rice Krispies' "'Cos there's little people on it"(pointing to the cartoon characters on the packet), but on a subsequent check on this question a month later Kaaren (4;7) pointed to the words on the label, ran her finger across the words in a left to right direction and said, "Rice Krispies. That's how she knows." She was able to discriminate between the words 'Coke' and 'Coca Cola', but like the other children could not recognize the gas station sign although she knew that, "It tells you which one to go to."

At 3 years 3 months, Sean found the questions from the observational scale somewhat tedious and because of this, probing questions were not asked. His response to the situation was much more positive three months later however, because he was able to complete many more of the tasks. He knew the word for 'calendar' but it was not until the second session that he was able to point to the words on it, when asked how they knew what day it was. At the first session he knew that mother was writing but it was not until the second session that he could give a specific reason ("Writing what they are going to buy") for this. When asked why mother had to write the list down, he replied, "So they won't forget." The 'STOP' sign gave him no difficulty and he even found the word in the context of the sentence on both occasions. Initially, in the first session, Sean did not know what the 'IRVING' gas station sign was for, but then asked the investigator what the sign said, was told, and when asked the question again he replied, "Just Gas." On the second occasion when asked how mother knew which gas station to go to he pointed to the sign, and said "Gas station." The 'IN' door sign caused him difficulty initially but on the second occasion he pointed generally to the print on the door with the comment, "Because it says 'in'." For the 'OUT' sign, he first responded by pointing to the sign, but did not know what it said. On his second attempt, when asked how they knew which door to go out, he pointed to the sign and said "OUT." The request to point to the word that said 'Coke' and then to find 'Coca Cola' resulted in Sean pointing to the cans in a generalized manner on the first occasion but when he was asked to complete this task during the later occasion, he did so successfully.

It can be seen then that Sean's awareness of print and his ability to understand some of its functions improved over the three month period between the two occasions when his knowledge was checked. How much of this improvement was due to his additional familiarity with both the tasks and the investigator, it is difficult to judge, but from other observations made of his behaviour with books and print during this period, it was obvious that he was becoming much more aware of print.

Kaaren (4;10) and Sean (3;6) were taken for a drive through two local towns, to determine their range of knowledge of the language of the environment. Again, like the other children in the study, they demonstrated an awareness of the signs for the major fast food outlets, and they were able to recognize a 'STOP' sign from its reverse side. Kaaren recognized a 'FOR SALE' sign outside a house and knew that it was "the yellow words that said 'For Sale'." Sean identified the large sign that had Wolfville, Historic Inn of Nova Scotia on it by saying, "I see a sign coming up. It says 'Wolfville, Nova Scotia'." Neither child however, exhibited a wide ranging knowledge of environmental language, and were in fact, more interested in asking questions of the investigator as to what each sign they saw said. This may have been the result of both parents working and not taking them out very often, and combined with that, the fact that they were relatively new to the area may have resulted in them not having had time to become familiar with all the signs.

All the children involved in the study were aware of the language of the environment to a greater or lesser extent and all were building their understanding of the instrumental (the 'I want' function) and the regularity (the 'Don't do that' function) (Halliday 1973, 1975) purposes that this language served. It was difficult to estimate the extent of the effect on their growing knowledge of this aspect of language and the uses it served for them, but the range of Gillian's awareness of environmental language certainly demonstrated its potential as a language learning experience. The problems of the highly contextualized settings distracting their attention from the printed message, became apparent, particularly in the case of Gillian, but the consistent feature of their responses to environmental language was that they were invariably meaningfully related to the context within which they were observed. The children were 'learning to mean' even if they were not always using the printed word to do so.

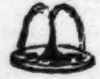
Reference has already been made to the fact that the children seemed particularly attracted to books with features that could be manipulated, and to books where the words were highlighted in some way. Some illustrations included the concept of environmental language in their pictures through the use of signs on buildings and directions of various kinds. All the children, for example were given Wiseman's Morris the Moose Goes to School by the investigator. They all, very quickly learned to point to the signs on the two shops which read, 'FISH'and 'CANDY'. In an illustration later in the book the bathroom doors had 'BOYS', 'GIRLS' and then 'BOYS AND MOOSE' as signs on them and again all the children learned to recognize these very quickly and delighted in pointing to them whenever the story was read to them.

Both Sean and Jennifer had Meg on the Moon read to them on numerous occasions throughout the period of the study, and reference has already been made to how Sean in particular responded to the words that were featured in the illustrations in this story. Both children however, would always point to the various words as the story was read to them and it was this activity with this book that seemed to be one of the influences on Sean starting to become aware of print on the page. In was interesting to note Sean's (3;5) reaction to being able to read spontaneously the words 'PET SHOW' on a sign in an illustration in Keats' Pet Show. When asked shortly after this if he was able to read yet, the following dialogue took place:

S: Yes. But not very much stories.
I: Not very much stories?
S: And not very much shows.
I: Not very much what?
S: Shows.

At the time the investigator did not realize that he was almost certainly referring back to the fact that he had just displayed his ability to read the word 'show' in 'Pet Show.'

Both Gillian and Kaaren demonstrated their interest in books that had language featured in various ways, Kaaren for example was always quick to point to the word 'HOTEL' on a building in one of the stories that was read to her on a repetitive basis and reference has already been made to her interest in the 'dum ditty' sequence that was printed in smaller and smaller print. Gillian constantly delighted in indicating that the manipulative features in one of their Disney Club books had the word 'Lift' on them to tell you what to do. In Curious George Gets a Medal she would invariably point to all the signs in the various pictures and read them. In this particular book there were signs in a museum that read 'Dinosaur Extinct', 'Baby Dinosaur' and 'Do not touch', and she was consistently accurate in her reading of these.

One of the most amusing incidents witnessed during the study occurred when Jennifer (3;10) was 'reading' Bemelman's Madeline to her brother Christopher (2;6). In one of the pictures in this book there is a scene of a square in Paris with a fountain spraying water out as in the following illustration:  . Christopher pointed to the water and cried excitedly, "McDonalds!" Jennifer however was not amused and stated quite firmly that, "No it's not McDonalds. It's a water fountain!" Such is the power of present day advertising and the young child's ability to cue to specific features in environmental language.

Environmental language that has been incorporated into illustration in children's books and language that has been used in highly visible and sometimes instructional ways can give children yet another experience with written language being used functionally. These children demonstrated a constant alertness to this type of language in their books and this appeared to serve a twofold purpose: it added to their awareness of the presence of printed language in their books and it gave them a further demonstration of the regulatory and instrumental functions of written language.

All the children involved in this study received magazines through the mail on a regular basis. Jennifer, Sean and Kaaren received the Sesame Street magazine and Gillian received two magazines, Playmates and Highlights. The arrival of these was invariably greeted with pleasure and some degree of excitement on the part of the children as the following comments indicate. Jennifer's mother recorded this observation in her Reading Log:

> Nov. 16 p.m.
>
> She (Jennifer) was very excited today because her "Sesame Street Magazine" came in the mail. As soon as Chris. went to have his nap she came run-

> ning with her magazine. We spent 1/2 hour reading and doing the activities suggested in the magazine.

During the interview with Kaaren's and Sean's live-in baby sitter she was asked if the children ever sat down with their books on their own during the day, to which she replied:

> The are receiving subscription magazines and when they get that, for three or four days they'll sit down and read them - look at them over and over again. Of if we give them a magazine, they'll sit and go over it ... They like the "Sesame Street" magazine because they can pick up the characters. It's something they really know. Kaaren also gets "The National Geographic," but she just carries it around while the "Sesame Street" magazine gets torn, cut out, coloured. They have in it a picture of something with three words and you have to pick out the word that matches the picture. When I do that with Sean, I say each word, then I'll say which one is "bear" and he usually can pick it out.

Gillian's parents reported that she had a great interest in games and puzzles and would spend long periods of time with these activities. The following are some of the entries by the mother in her Reading Log which demonstrate this feature of her behaviour:

> Nov. 28
>
> Picked up the latest issue of "Highlights" and explained to me the picture games and puzzles.
>
> Jan. 5
>
> Busy 'reading' her "Highlights" magazine all morning.

Jan. 18

Read various puzzles in "Highlights" magazine with emphasis on syllables.

Mar. 31

Browsing through a new issue of "Highlights." She found all the hidden pictures.

Apr. 5

She found a game in "Playmate" so we ran through that a few times (she remembered all the words!).

The transcript recorded below, indicates very clearly, the powerful role these games can serve in developing the children's desire to master the task of learning to read and provide them with yet another experience involving written language being used functionally in the regulatory mode. Gillian (5;9) brought her Playmate magazine to the investigator and wanted to play one of the games which consisted of throwing a dice and moving counters over a series of squares with a number of penalties interspersed around on them. On various squares there were pictures of animals with their names printed underneath them. The following dialogue took place:

I: What are all these directions? Let's see if we can work out what the directions are.
G: Well let's see.
I: Where does it say start?
G: (Pointing correctly). Start. Finish.
I: O.K. What's the first thing. Say we land here. What does this tell us?
G: Hop ahead.
I: How many spaces? - Three (G. echoes "Three") spaces (G. echoes "Spaces"). And who are we on now?

G: Mary Mouse (correctly).
I: And then on to? - Miss one turn.
G: Miss one turn. And this is Peggy Pig.
This is Hop one - (pause).
I: Ahead.
G: Ahead one space. That's Freddy Frog.
I: Yes. O.K.
G: Hop-ahead-to-Kitty Cat.
I: Very good! You knew that one.
G: Chuckwa Chip.
I: Chuckie.
G: Chuckie Chip. Hop one on a space (uncertain).
I: Hop. - (G. tries "Two"). What's that start with?
What's that first letter?
G: B.
I: So. -Hop. -
G: Back.
I: Back. That's very good.
G: Hop back two spaces.
I: No. That's not spaces. You've got that word on
the page already. What's that? (Points to the
word start).
G: To start. Hop back to start!

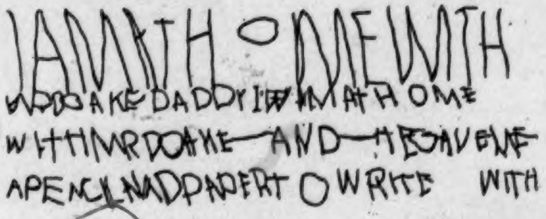
The learning of the game proceeded in this manner and then it was played several times. By the time this had happened, Gillian could follow the directions perfectly. Later that evening she taught her father how to play the game, displaying complete control over the language involved.

The children's magazines and their contents, obviously provided these children with a surprising amount of purposeful and enjoyable experience with written language. They served as vehicles for independent activity, as a basis for parent and child to have some fun together with language games, and they gave the children further opportunity to gain more understanding of the functional nature of written language.

This awareness of the functional nature of reading was reflected in Kaaren's (4;8) and Gillian's (5;7) observations concerning the purposes of their parents reading. After commenting on the fact that her mother and father read "newspapers and magazines" Kaaren was asked why she thought that they read the newspaper, to which she replied, "To see what's on sale and to see what's very expensive." When asked why she thought her parents read to themselves she commented, "'Cos kids don't want to hear important things." Gillian observed, when asked a similar question about her mother's reading, that "She reads magazines to see what's on. And she reads recipes." Asked "Why do you think that they read?" she replied, "'Cos they learn." Both children were aware of the immediate and specific information that could be obtained through reading, but seemed to be aware, even at this early age of the wider and perhaps more important learning that could result from this activity.

Reference has already been made in this section to the children's understanding of use of written grocery list and in Chapter IV reports of the children's writing behaviour that had been observed by the parents, were recorded. The feature of writing that seemed to attract and interest all the children, was the sending and receiving of letters. Kaaren's developing communication with her grandmother, has already been referred to and Gillian had also started letter writing. The following was a letter written by Jennifer

(3;4), to her father, who was away at camp with children from his school. She composed the letter and the investigator spelled the words for her. The whole process took approximately 30 minutes and she was extremely proud of her effort. The following is a direct copy of what Jennifer produced which has been reduced to a quarter of its original size. A transcript of what she wrote has been recorded below this reproduction.



I AM AT HOME WITH
MR DOAKE DADDY I'M AT HOME
WItH MR DOAKE——AND——HE GAVE ME
A PENCIL AND PAPER TO WRITE WITH

Sean (3;5), who had demonstrated very little interest in learning to write, and was just beginning to try to produce the letters of his name, started to become interested in receiving and sending letters. The following description of how his attention to this form of communication received a stimulus, was recorded during the interview with the live-in baby-sitter. She had just commented on the fact that the children had seen her writing letters from time to time:

> Once I gave him Sean a letter I received from my parents to look at and he was able to find his name and he wanted to know why his name was there. I told him it said "Say Hi to Sean," so he wanted to say "Hi" to them. Then I gave him a pen and told him to write it. (She did not say what he did as a result of this, nor was she questioned on it

> unfortunately). He really enjoys getting mail. So we tell him he has to write letters in order to receive mail.

By the conclusion of the visits Sean (3;6) could produce only four very shaky letters, and they were of course the letters of his own name. Jennifer (3;10) on the other hand had developed a great deal of skill in printing and her mother reported on an interesting game that she (Jennifer) devised for her to play in bed. The following record from the Reading Log describes this:

> Apr. 14
>
> When I put her to bed, she wanted to pretend that the headboard on her bed was a blackboard and she used her finger to trace out the letters of various words as I spelled them. She wanted to know how to spell the family's names, the names of objects in her room such as bed, pillow, rug, lamp. After she wrote each word, she carefully pretended to erase it.

This "game" was played on many subsequent nights and is a clear indication of Jennifer's fascination with learning to produce written language.

Gillian's interest in writing appeared to be generated primarily from letter and card writing and receiving. There were numerous entries in the mother's Reading Log describing how Gillian had written letters to friends and relations. One day she wrote 24 Valentine cards, containing "I love you, Gillian", one for each of her kindergarten classmates. The mother reported that she would sit at the task of writing for long period of time, up to an hour and a half on occasions, and appeared totally involved in it. She would ask her mother how to spell words, but the mother reported that she knew "quite a lot of words, like her own name, 'school', 'cat', 'dog', 'go', 'to', 'and', 'the'" and similar short function words. She commented that she could always say the first letter of a word that she wanted spelled, except for silent letters, and that she seemed to use syllabication techniques quite naturally. She remarked on Gillian's reaction to receiving letters in this way:

> She loves to sit down and read them. She asks me to read them first because she wants to hear everything. She carries it around all day. She doesn't keep them though, because of the amount.

Kaaren (4;10) received a stimulus to her letter writing activity in the form of a language experience story from her five-year-old cousin in Montreal. This consisted of a small stapled "booklet" containing photographs of the family house with some alterations being made to it, with captions printed by the mother, under each photograph. The receipt of this stimulated Kaaren to produce a similar booklet to send back to her cousin.

It can be seen then that writing was becoming an integral part of these children's lives and for Gillian and Kaaren at least was beginning to serve an extremely important communicative function. The most impressive feature of their writing activity was that it was almost all self-initiated and self-regulated. All the children, except Sean would engage themselves in writing for very long periods of time, on many occasions, calling for help with their spelling only when necessary. Whereas their experience with the language of the environment was providing these children with access to the instrumental and regulatory linguistic functions of written language, their involvement in their letter and card writing activities was affording them opportunities to express themselves at the 'interactional' (the 'I love you' function), personal (the 'This is me' function) and at the 'heuristic' (the 'What's that?' or 'Finding out' function) (Halliday, 1973) levels of language development. Through their self-directed writing activity, these children were obtaining essential experience, as Halliday (1975) suggests in their "...progressive mastery of a functional potential" (p. 242) for understanding and using written language.

Summary

Although the bedtime story could be seen as a major contributing factor to these children's growing ability to deal with written language, without them having a variety of experiences with the language of the environment and the opportunity to begin to communicate through their own writing, their rate of progress in developing their control over this form of communication would have been slowed considerably. Books were providing these children with indirect multi-functional experiences needed for them to advance in their mastery of written language, but their direct experience with the language around them and their own sending and receiving of written messages gave them an immediate involvement with this language being used in at least five of Halliday's (1973, 1975) 'functions of language' levels.

On the wider plane of their modes of experience with the different forms of written language then, there was an interrelatedness and interdependence operating that contributed to the development of the children's 'functional potential' with this aspect of language. Within the children's modes of experience with each of the forms of written language however, there was a network of cause and effect relationships in the process of being built as a result of each child's different encounters with this written language. These were equally pervasive in their effect on the growth of their emergent reading behaviour. How Gillian's view of reading changed subtly from seeing it essentially as something you learn through remembering the words, to an awareness of the importance of the visual information and an ability to use this while reading, was an example of this 'network' in operation. This change was influenced by her wider experience with written language to a certain extent. The single most important factor appeared to be however, that she could select from an ample range of stories which she could 'read,' one particular favourite which served as a basis for the development of her increasingly accurate eye-ear-voice matching skills. This in turn, enabled her to grow in her awareness of print, extend her control over the eye movements as necessary for reading, and provided her with the opportunity to continue to build her own strategies for the process of learning to read.

With Gillian's increasing awareness of what the process of reading involved, came a change in her attitude of seeing learning to read as something that previously was going to be "easy" to something that was going to be "hard". Her growing desire to be able to read independently and her years of enjoyable experiences with books, did not allow her changing attitudes towards the difficulty of the learning process to deter her from continuing, it seemed with increasing momentum, her efforts to master the task. The 'ripple' effect of the interacting forces at work in this little girl's reading development could be clearly seen.

The data presented in this chapter demonstrated also, that all of these children had made considerable headway in developing their understanding of the functions of some of the written language that surrounded them. Once they had internalized some of the major functions of this system of language, they were able to turn their attention to the form of that language. The data revealed that they were all progressing in their understanding of the various concepts related to books, print and reading. They drew attention to the need to give young children the opportunity to traverse all the steps necessary in order to develop their understanding of the concepts involved in dealing with written language. The picture seemed to be one of young children actively engaged in the process of becoming literate, and doing this in their own way and in their own time.

The similarity to what they were doing with written language learning, to what they were doing in their developmentally based, oral language learning was too strong to be ignored. Holdaway (1979) describes this type of learning in the following way:

> Developmental learning ... tends to be regulated and paces by the learner in response to inner controls of a highly sensitive nature that could neither be understood, nor replicated, by the guiding adult on the outside. (p. 22)

This appeared to be the type of learning that was present when these children and written language came together, particularly when this written language was in the form of a much loved, favourite story.

The progress that these young children were making in becoming literate as evidenced by the data presented in this chapter, raised several questions concerning the validity of claims of some linguists, for example, Cazden (1975) and Mattingly (1972, 1978, 1979), that children must have developed a certain (unspecified) level of linguistic (or metalinguistic) awareness before they can begin to learn to read successfully. All of the children involved in this study could be seen to be making progress in learning to read, without any demands being made on them to reach some prerequisite level of linguistic awareness, either implicit or explicit. They were obviously becoming increasingly linguistically aware, albeit, mostly on an implicit level, as they gained greater experience with written language being used in various ways, but their progress in learning to read did not stop because they had not reached some prerequisite level of learning.

Coupled with this important question of the need to be linguistically aware in order to be able to read, were the questions raised concerning the concepts of cognitive confusion (Vernon, 1957) and cognitive clarity (Downing, 1979). The data presented in this chapter revealed that, although these children did not understand at an explicit or even at the implicit level in some cases, all the concepts involved in books, print and reading, they were all making progress in learning about reading and learning to read. Because they did not, and in many cases could not understand at an adult level, some of the more important concepts involved in reading, seemed scarcely a reason to label them as being cognitively confused. No doubt Gillian could have been described as lacking cognitive clarity by the fact that she was still at times, confusing the concepts of a 'letter' and a 'word' and had not, until towards the end of the study, been able to demonstrate her understanding of the presence of spaces between words, but she was still making rapid progress in her literacy development. Any attempt to "provide her with cognitive clarity" for these aspects of written language may well have served the purpose of distracting her from using her highly effective, self-initiated strategies for learning to read.

Finally, the data presented in this chapter provided examples of the process of the children's learning proceeding, as Werner (1957, p. 126) suggested, from a relatively global state with little differentiation, to an increasingly differentiated and hierarchically integrated state. The process was seen in the development of the children's ability to eye-ear-voice match as they engaged in reading-like behaviour. It could also be seen in the children's concepts of the process of reading. At the commencement of the study for example, reading for Gillian was the reproduction of the story through a retelling of its basic theme, with language that approximated the original, without being dependent on the words on the pages but being dependent on her parents for initially reading the story to her. By the conclusion of the study, she had moved to an awareness that reading involved matching almost exactly, what she was saying with what she was seeing on the page, and doing so through her own efforts to use her own knowledge of the specific visual information that was there. This movement from the general to the specific and from relatively uncoordinated efforts to well coordinated and finely controlled ones, seemed to be an outstanding characteristic of these children's learning in the area of written language.

The most important feature of the development of the children's concepts about books, print and reading however, seemed to lie in the conditions which were present in the home to nurture this growth. It became very clear to the investigator as he observed these children and interacted with them in a range of written experience situations, that they needed large amounts of time in these situations, they needed as many and as varied experiences as they could obtain with written language and they needed most of all, a warm, supportive and invitational atmosphere to pervade these experiences. Finally they needed the opportunity to experiment in their efforts to reproduce this written language without fear of constant correction.

The following chapter examines one of the major methods that they used to obtain a means whereby they could carry out this experimentation.

CHAPTER VI

READING-LIKE BEHAVIOUR

Introduction

There is now adequate evidence which was documented in Chapter II of this report, to show that the greater majority of early readers came from book oriented homes and were read to regularly by one or both parents from a very early age. Some of these researchers commented on the fact that an often observed feature of these children's behaviour with their books, which occurred sometimes with the parents and sometimes when the children were alone with their books, was their apparent ability to 'read' increasingly larger parts of a book, frequently with a surprising degree of accuracy. Although Clay (1972) made some observations on this 'talking like a book' behaviour and its importance in the early reading development of children, only Holdaway (1979) appears to have examined its particular significance in any depth.

One of the outcomes of putting young children with books and reading to them stories that they love to hear over and over again, is the seemingly spontaneous appearance in some form or other of reading-like behaviour with these stories. All the parents of the children involved in this study reported that they had observed this behaviour in their children and it was seen in all the children regularly by the investigator. The extent and frequency of its use and the time that it first appeared, seemed to be related to a number of factors within the child's experience. In order to understand its significance, a more specific description was required. The purpose of this chapter is to describe in some detail, the development of this behaviour in the children involved in the study and to examine carefully its characteristics, its relationship and its contribution to their emergent reading behaviours.

Developing Reading-Like Behaviour

Reading-like behaviour has been seen in the past as a product of the repeated reading of some story, resulting in the children being able to memorize the words of the story with varying degrees of accuracy. The process has been thought to operate at the superficial, rote learning, and imitative level of behaviour, rather than at the deeper, meaning-oriented, developmentally based level of learning. The data reported in this chapter demonstrate how the behaviour develops much more as an outcome of the latter rather than the former type of learning and as such, has strong parallels with the strategies and processes employed by children in their learning of oral language.

The conditions whereby reading-like behaviour began to emerge within the children, have already been reported and discussed in previous sections of this report. Whether the behaviour was able to operate at a covert or at an overt level did not seem to prevent it from appearing. It was apparent however, that the restrictions placed on the younger sibling's participatory 'reading' activities by the presence of an older sibling, exercised an important influence on the frequency and extent of its occurrence in the younger member of the family, and may have, in the case of one of the families, been even more serious in its effect.

The preventative actions of the older sibling on the development of reading-like behaviour in the younger sibling, was clearly evident in all three families. In the case of Gillian for example, the parents made several observations as to how Gregory, her older brother, tended to dominate and control the shared book experience that both children participated in with one of the parents. The fact that he "would not tolerate any interruptions from Gillian" was commented on by the mother in her Reading Log (January 31) for example, and this attitude was witnessed by this investigator on numerous occasions, both when he was reading to the children and when he was observing either of the parents reading to them.

On one occasion, during which the father read two Disney Club books (*Disney World* and *A Visit to the Haunted House*) to Gillian (5;5) and Gregory, the brother objected to his sister's participation in the reading on fourteen separate occasions, seven for each book. The father ignored his protestations on every occasion, except for the first, where Gillian started holding the book and manipulating the moving parts. He allowed Gillian to manipulate the parts but explained to her that he would have to hold the book, otherwise her brother would not be able to see the pages. From that point onwards, he avoided taking any direct action on the issue by continuing his reading of the story, by directing the children's attention to significant features in the books, or by asking their help in explaining some of the action.

Gregory's protests were many and varied. They ranged from complaints concerning his not being able to see the page because of Gillian's hand, to objecting to her asking any questions or participating in the reading in any way, other than by listening. The following transcripts provide some examples of this recurring situation:

F: (Reading) "Oh, Pooh," said Stephanie.
G: (Pointing to the words). That says, "Oh, Pooh".
F: That's right (with pleasure in his voice).
Gr: Stop that! (Referring to Gillian's participation. Father continues reading).

And later in the story:

F: (Reading) It looked like it hadn't been opened in about seven hundred and seventy-seven years.
G: Where does it say, seven hundred and seventy-seven years?
F: There (Points to the words).
Gr: Don't ask questions Gill! (Father continues with his reading).

Again:

F: (reading) ... up another fearful flight of stairs.
G: They were trying to be so brave, right?
Gr: Gillian! (In his most authoritative tone of voice. Father continues reading after briefly agreeing with Gillian).

Although Gregory's actions interfered with Gillian's participation in the reading as she appeared to want to involve herself even more in the activity, like her father, she never responded overtly to any of her brother's remarks. Gillian provided an explicit example of how her brother interfered with her overt participation in her reading-like behaviour. When she was asked how she had learned the words of one of her story records. She explained:

> I keep copying it when it's on. I used to put it on when we bought it - When I used to sing out loud Greg said to me "Stop it!", so I just had to whisper it the next time I putted it on. I had to go like this, (Demonstrated how she whispered).

Gillian (4;6) was observed doing this when she was in Edmonton, but at the time, the reason for her putting her ear close to the stereogram speaker and whispering was not understood.

The most obvious instance of the older sibling objecting to the younger sibling's participation in the shared reading occurred with Kaaren (4;6) and Sean (3;2). The father had started reading one of the children's favourite stories, Hargreaves' Mr. Impossible and first Kaaren and then Sean started to 'read', as they both knew the story. Kaaren protested volubly about Sean's 'reading' and the father attempted to obtain some cooperation from her to let Sean participate. Sean continued to try and 'read' with the following result:

S: ('Reading') Once upon a time (Kaaren starts shouting her protests and Sean repeats his beginning). Once upon a time Mr.-
K: (Shouting) I don't want to hear his read! I - If he is going to read I read somewhere else!
F: O.K. (Somewhat takenaback)
K: If he reads you (the father) and me are going to go somewhere else! (Pouring her words out at a great rate).
F: We can all read this.
S: (Ignoring the fuss, starts reading again). Once upon a time ... (Kaaren runs from the room).

After Sean had finished his attempt at 'reading' he was sent to get his sister, who returned and 'read' the story fluently to her father, while Sean sat on the investigator's knee and talked to him, ignoring his sister's performance.

On the previous visit, the protests concerning participation had worked in the opposite direction, with Sean trying to insist on his sister not interfering in his attempted 'reading', with the father's assistance, of

The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Kaaren knew this story very much better than Sean and every time he hesitated or miscued, she would come in with the required words very quickly. Sean cried out in considerable frustration on five occasions with such protests as, "Don't read!" or "Don't read with me!", or "No! Don't do it with me!" but despite his complaints and the father's several requests for her to "... give Sean a chance and then you can do it," Kaaren continued to dominate the reading until Sean finally stopped participating altogether.

In the case of Jennifer and Christopher, this problem was not nearly as obvious, but its effects were seen to be subtle and serious. In any shared book experience where the two children were being read to by one of the parents, Jennifer almost totally dominated any participatory activity that occurred, and Christopher tended to be left with a rather passive listening role. It was distinctly noticeable that he seldom joined these shared experiences, and when he did he usually did not stay in them for very long. His parents tended to interpret his lack of interest from the basis of his age and shorter attention span and the fact that he seemed to be "more interested in mechanical things", as his mother commented during the initial parent interview.

During the first occasion the investigator observed in his home, Jennifer (3;5) was being read to by the mother.

They were sitting in an armchair and she was on her mother's knee. Christopher (2;0) who had been playing with his toys tried to attract his mother's attention to be able to join the activity, by coming to her knee, standing beside her arm and walking around the chair several times. His mother seemed oblivious of his presence and continued to read to Jennifer. Christopher finally gave up and was then taken off to bed by his father.

On the occasion of the last visit to the home, the mother was observed reading to Jennifer, Christopher and a visiting playmate. She was seated on a couch in the children's playroom and Jennifer and the visitor were on each side of her. Christopher was kneeling behind his sister. As the mother read, he tried to get closer to the book so that he could see the pictures, but could not get past his sister, as her head was constantly in the path of his vision. He then went around and placed himself behind the visitor but with the same result. Finally he climbed down off the couch, went over to the toy box, picked out a small wooden hammer and started to strike his sister on the legs, much to the surprise and consternation of the mother and Jennifer, neither of whom had seemed to be aware of his efforts to participate more closely in the shared activity.

These conflict situations which occurred as a result

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of the efforts of the younger sibling attempting to play a more vigorous role in the story time experience of the family, were the only occasions when this activity was marred by any unpleasantness. When books, parents and children came together for story time, the pervasive atmosphere usually was one of warm family sharing.

The results of this dominant and restrictive role played by the older sibling certainly had a noticeable effect on the amount of overt reading-like behaviour and other participatory activities engaged in by the younger sibling in the shared book experience situations. Gillian's father observed for example, during the initial interview that:

> She's (Gillian) just a much more passive kind of person in the reading process I think than Greg was. ... Gillian is the kind of person who takes a lot in and surprises you. All of a sudden she lays it out.

A similar pattern was commented on by the parents of Kaaren and Sean. The father observed that they had both memorized some stories and could both 'read' them, with what he thought was equal facility, but the mother remarked that, "He's (Sean) very shy, and Kaaren has always been happy to shoot them off and show off."

Whereas the actions of the older sibling did not seem to have any obvious effect on the amount of shared book experience engaged in by Gillian and Sean, the same may not have been true of Christopher. Although his age and shorter attention span almost certainly were influential factors in the amount of book experience he would join into, the possibility of his avoiding the situation because of his experiences in it may have been more serious and long term in their effect.

The relationship between family position and success in reading has been found to have an effect on children's progress in learning to read. Otto (1965) for example, found that the first child and the only child were usually good readers, whereas the poorer readers frequently came from the middle or the end of the family. The reason given for this situation has been that the older and/ or the only child was often seen to be read to more than those children who were born later in the family, because the parents had more time available when there was only one child present. It would seem that where there was approximately eighteen months to two years between the first and second children, as was the case in the families involved in this study,other less obvious, but equally important factors may have begun to operate in the reading development of the children. If reading-like behaviour is an important element in the growth of these children's emergent reading behaviours, then any action which restricts or slows down its development must be seen as harmful. The examples reported here, of the older siblings' restrictive policies on the participatory activity of the younger sibling, indicated that this was occurring. Perhaps even more important, was the effect that this had on Christopher. He appeared to be seeking to occupy himself in activities where his attempted participation would not be interfered with and he may have been learning to view books and reading as something to be avoided because of the passive role he was being forced to play and his inability to compete with his sister in making overt responses when the opportunity to do so was presented.

The conditions which facilitated the development of reading-like behaviour in the children involved in this study, influenced, in quite important ways, the means by which they proceeded to learn this behaviour. For some, the processes used were essentially silent or covert, while for others they were active and overt.

Silent Participation

One of the outstanding characteristics of the shared book experiences between the parents and the children observed throughout the duration of this study, was the avid interest displayed by all the children in listening to their stories. Like Callaway's (1974) son, they seemed to be prepared to listen intently to stories being read for long periods of time. They appeared to be, as Gillian's father commented so perceptively, "absorbing the story" and all parents expressed their surprise at the way in which their children frequently could retell a story in considerable detail, after it had been heard only once.

Although the following observations have been based on research conducted with students who were already reading, the findings would appear to be directly relevant to children who listen to written discourse frequently. The correlations between reading comprehension test scores and listening comprehension have usually been found to be relatively high (Devine, 1978; Duker, 1965; Durrell, 1969; Olejnik, 1978; Work, 1978) especially when the material used has been of a narrative kind.

Educators have known for some time, that reading comprehension involves skill in following and perceiving the organization of a passage (Carroll, 1972; Davis, 1941). The extent to which the reader can see relationships among ideas is enhanced by how the reader can perceive the structure that ties sentences together, or the perception that no such structure exists. As Kintsch and Van Dijk (1975) suggest:

> When a reader reads a story he knows that what he reads is a story rather than some other kind of text, and he expects it to have the episode structure that is characteristic of stories. Thus, he approaches the story with a certain schema, that is, a set of expectations about the structure of the story. (p. 104)

Readers (and listeners) then, expect a story to have a structure, "they perceive it in terms of its structure and remember it accordingly" (Guthrie, 1977, p. 576).

A great deal of recent research into the comprehension and retention of written discourse has concentrated on developing methods of analyzing the way in which meaning is organized in text. By matching the recall protocols of the students who have been asked to read various kinds of passages, to an analysis of each one of these, researchers have proceeded to make a range of inferences concerning the processes involved in comprehension.

Most investigators until recently, have limited their studies to an analysis of simple stories (Bower,1976; Kintsch, 1974,1976; Kintsch and van Djik, 1975; Mandler, and Johnson, 1977; Norman and Rumelhart, 1975; Thorndyke, 1977). Guthrie (1977) reports for example, that Bower (1976) found that what people remember about stories is powerfully determined by the structural importance of the information to the story as a whole. Stories with a strong theme and a clear structure, were those that were most clearly and easily recalled. Mandler and Johnson (1977) found that the beginnings of stories and their final conclusions in particular, were prominent in retention of six year old children. Guthrie concludes his brief report with a plea for teachers to:

> Recognize the ability of even six year olds to search for and use abstract story structure as a basis for comprehension and memory. (p. 577)

The children involved in this study had listened to literally thousands of stories during the few years of their lives. The greater majority of these stories would have had a very clearly developed setting, theme, plot and a final resolution. The setting would quickly identify the main characters, the location and probably the time of the story. The theme would revolve around the goal of the main character (or characters). The plot would consist of a series of episodes which would be designed, frequently on a repetitive basis, to assist the main character(s) to reach his/her (their) goal. Resolution finally would be achieved through the attainment of that goal. Once these children established their schema for the structure of these stories it would be a relatively simple task for them to recognize a structure in a new story being read to them and to slot the different setting, characters and the like into their existing schema for that type of story.

As a result of their extensive experience with books of many kinds, these children in a very real sense were "absorbing their stories". Reproducing them presented few difficulties, except perhaps for the finer, less important details. But even here, once they had a full range of schemata for the various types of stories, folk tales and dramas fairly established, the details became recallable as Gillian's mother recorded in her Reading Log:

> Mar. 11
> She (Gillian) also has good comprehension and remembers little details of stories months (and years) later.

Reference has already been made to her father's observation that Gillian seemed to know "the content (his emphasis) of the story - almost any story" and to Jennifer's mother's comment concerning the fact that she seemed able to "relate the story read at nursery school in every detail."

A further example of young children's ability to develop a sense of structure for their stories was given by Gillian's father. During a discussion with the investigator concerning her ability to write whole sentences, he described what her reaction had been on one occasion, to a 'story producing' task he had given both children one evening:

> One evening I gave them sixty seconds to each tell their stories. Often they go on and on just to stay up a little later. In a story telling frame she (Gillian) uses very often the typical "Once upon a time" or some such beginning to a story. She links a lot of sentences together with "and". I was amazed at how quickly she put all of this together and continually talked - she's a continuous talker anyway - but whatever the story was in the plot and so on she was able to rattle it off and I think probably thinking steps ahead. The whole thing just flowed out and she finished within her sixty seconds.

Not only was this five year old girl developing a sense of story structure which she was using to 'read' her familiar stories, she was able to use her knowledge or produce well-constructed stories herself.

It can be seen then that the foundations for the development of reading-like behaviour, were being laid for these children by their consistent involvement with books. Despite the fact that much of their participation in the story-time situations may have been silent, they were still, as a result of their intense and frequent listening continuing to build the framework to allow them to reproduce at least the meaning of their stories for themselves.

When new stories were being read the children seldom attempted to participate actively in the reading other than by occasionally pointing to the pictures or asking some questions concerning word meanings or the actions. When favourite stories were being reread, it became obvious that the children, despite their sometimes enforced silence, were actively participating in the reading. They would invariably correct the parent if a page was missed or a miscue on a particular word occurred. Kaaren for example, would sometimes appear to be not particularly interested in a story being reread but as soon as the mother paused in her reading, she would come in with the appropriate word. On one occasion she had a cold and was sitting on the knee of a house guest, well away from where the story was being read, and had not seemed to be listening, but when the story was finished she made reference to the unseen final illustration with the comment that, "He looks mad doesn't he?".

The children also gave other signs of their attentive and ongoing silent participation in the rereading of familiar stories by being quick to come in with the appropriate word, phrase or sentence whenever an opportunity presented itself. This 'completion-type reading' was taken one step further to what could be termed 'cooperative reading' according to an entry in Gillian's mother's Reading Log (February 10). She reported that Gillian (5;8) even went so far as tell her father what was coming next in the story before he turned over the page, when he was reading to her.

Although 'completion' and 'cooperative reading' could scarcely be described as silent participation, they were in fact the products of the children's continuing covert involvement in their stories, and demonstrated just how carefully they were following and even thinking ahead as the story was read. Transcripts which illustrate these types of active participation in the story-time situation have been recorded in the following section of this chapter along with examples of 'mumble reading' and 'echo reading'.

All of these were methods used by the children in their efforts to gain greater mastery over the verbal elements of their favourite stories.

Active, Overt Participation

Apart from such factors as the dominant and restrictive role of an older sibling, the policies operating in the home related to the selection of stories to be read and the nature of the language used in the stories, the most important influence on the appearance of active, overt participation in the reading by the children, seemed to be the manner in which the story was read by the parent. Where the parent read rapidly, with infrequent pauses, the children were given few opportunities to participate at the overt level. If the rhythm and rate of speech used by the parent did not approximate that of the children, the frequency and extent of their overt participation appeared to be reduced if not entirely eliminated whether the story was a well-known, favourite one or not. On the other hand, if the parent read more slowly, maintaining a rhythm and pace which approximated the speech production speed of the children, then participation in the form of the various techniques used, was more likely to appear. This was made even more certain if the parent adopted the policy of pausing at appropriate places throughout the story, to give the children the opportunity to complete the sentence or to fill the gap with the required word or words.

Although no conclusions could be drawn from the observations made of the parents' reading behaviour with respect to their pace, rhythm and amount of pausing incorporated into the reading, it was distinctly noticeable that all three fathers were much more likely to read at a slow leisurely pace and invite participation than the three mothers. The mothers of course read a great deal more to the children than the fathers, and all of them did, on many occasions, read more slowly and invited participation from the children, but their basic style of presenting a story was generally faster than that of the fathers.

Another factor which had an immediate effect on overt participation on the part of the children, was the attitude of the parent towards their children's attempts to participate. If the parent was acceptant of virtually any response made, the children would continue to try to involve themselves actively in the reading. If the parent however, tried to demand accuracy from the children, the effect was usually immediate as can be seen in the following transcript. The mother of Sean (3;1) and Kaaren (4;5) had just started to read Meg on the Moon to the children and invited their participation:

M: I'll start at the count down. Here comes the count down. Ten. Maybe you could count with me. Nine.
K and S: Nine
M: Eight
K: Eight
M: What's this (Pointing to the figure '7'. The

children mumble. The mother points to '6')
S: Eight
K: Nine
M: No! Six. Nine's up there (Points).
What's that? (Points to the figure '5')
K: Five
M: Joe? (Her nickname for 'Sean". Points to '4')
S: Seven
M: No!
S: (Immediately) I don't want to talk right now.

Although all the other parents involved in the study displayed a tendency to try and have the children reproduce the language of their stories with some accuracy, they seldom insisted on it. They displayed a remarkable ability to invite their children to participate in the reading at a point where the children were almost always assured of success and they conveyed a sense of pleasure at their attempt. The investigator himself found it difficult to refrain from repeating correctly, an "incorrect" response made by the children and constantly had to be on his guard against doing this when interacting with the children and their books. It seemed that there was no surer method of reducing or eliminating the children's active, overt participation in a shared book experience, than by demanding accurate responses on their part.

One of the features of children's oral language learning is that their efforts to produce oral language in some form is almost always met with approval, attention and pleasure on the part of the parents, no matter how unrecognizable the resulting sound may be. The principles of experimentation and successive approximation coupled with immediate, constant and positive reinforcement for any attempts made on the part of their children to produce oral language, operate almost universally and seemingly instinctively among the parents around the world.

But in written language learning, the pattern is usually quite different. Whether children are trying to write or read their language, the expectation of the surrounding adults, be they parent or teacher, is that they should produce a correct and accurate response virtually from their first attempts. No warm affectionate response for an attempt that only vaguely resembles the original, but an immediate corrective and negative reaction which clearly informs the children of their failure. The effects of this type of response were easily seen in Sean's reaction to what his mother thought was a legitimate demand for accuracy. The delicate feedback mechanisms which operate so powerfully in the oral language learning experiences of the children, are given little chance to develop in their written language learning, where the feedback comes negatively and from an external source.

It can be seen then, that a number of factors operated to reduce the amount and the nature of the children's active, overt participation in the reading of their stories. Despite the effects of these factors however, their overt participation was observed and experienced on numerous occasions when books were being read and it would sometimes appear, during the first reading of a story that had a strong repetitive, rhyming and rhythmic quality to its language. The variety of techniques the children used to involve themselves in the reading of their stories have been examined in the following sections.

Mumble Reading. Mumble reading was a strategy all the children involved in this study used to participate actively in the repeated reading of some story. Unfortunately, because of its nature, it is virtually impossible to demonstrate its characteristics through the transcription of an audiotape, but the following is an attempt to do so. This transcription was recorded when Gillian was 4 years 6 months old and was being read to by the investigator. The story Meet Babar and His Family had been read to Gillian on only two or three occasions previously by the parents. She had just finished 'reading', with considerable fluency, her favourite book, the Three Little Kittens.

G: You'll have to help me with this one 'cos I don't know it very well.

I: (Reading) One morning, Babar the King of the elephants opened his window. It's a sunny day.

G: (Echo reading) It's a sunny day.

I: The leaves and the flowers seem to have opened overnight. (In this sentence, Gillian came in with the words "the" and "flowers" fractionally after the investigator started to read them and then mumbled the final two words of the sentence in a similar manner). Babar called to his wife Queen Celeste. (Again

> Gillian mumbles an approximation for the words "called to his wife" and mumbled the queen's name). And their three children Tom, Flora and Alexander. (Again Gillian mumbles the words at the beginning of the sentence and then with the names of the children she started saying them fractionally after the investigator).

This type of mumble reading continued throughout the book, except that at one point Gillian set up the conditions for echo reading to occur and this continued intermittently, with other forms of reading-like behaviour until the end of the story.

Mumble reading was seen to have two distinct features, and these were characteristic of this strategy when it was used by the other children involved in the study. The first feature was the way in which Gillian would approximate the words being read using an indecipherable mumble. This was usually started fractionally after the reader had commenced saying the words. It appeared at certain points in the sentences being read but was seldom maintained as an indecipherable mumble for any entire sentence. The second feature appeared to develop from the initial mumbleing efforts. Here Gillian produced the actual words, but again said them fractionally behind the reader as if she was using the initial sound the reader made to confirm an anticipated response that she had constructed from her expectation of what was going to come next.

One of the most significant features of mumble reading was that it appeared as a result of an inner direction from the children. It was not a strategy that was imposed on them, and they obviously used it in order to become more proficient at 'reading' their favourite stories, but they used it at an instinctive, unconscious level. Cunningham (1978), who observed the technique being used by groups of teachers as they tried to read a story written by her, using a strange alphabet, reported that mumble reading appeared spontaneously in over a dozen groups that she had attempt the task. She commented that, "I'm not sure why they do it except that I know they are trying to get meaning from what they read " (p. 411).

Mumble reading seemed to be used by the children involved in this study as a bridge or as a stepping stone to develop a more complete control over their stories. They were already familiar with the basic structure of the story which was being read to them, but in order to be able to reproduce the eposodic pattern of the story more completely so that none of the details would be omitted, they had to learn more cues to provide them with starting points. One way to learn these cues was to try and read along with the reader, being careful not to overtax their memories by attempting to remember every word on the page. So they were selective in their "mumbles", usually concentrating first on key words in sentences. The next step in the process was to attempt to reproduce parts of sentences as favourite stories were read to them.

Completion reading. Completion reading was the most predominant method used by the children in this study to aid them in their development of more comprehensive reading-like behaviour. This technique appeared whenever the reader paused at a point in the story and appropriate words were able to be given by the children to complete the phrase or sentence. With stories such as Did You Ever See?, My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes, Just For You or The Very Hungry Caterpillar for example, completion reading would commence in the children before overt mumble reading had appeared, sometimes during the first reading of the story. On other occasions, it was used after the story had been read two or three times. With some stories, it did not appear at all, no matter how frequently they were read.

Jennifer's (3;5) mother commented during the initial interview in answer to a question asking her how she usually read a story that:

> I usually just read the story and she will fill in certain words. Some books lend themselves to this sort of thing and there are some that she enjoys doing that with.

On being asked as to what type of books Jennifer liked she explained:

> She particularly likes rhyming books where she can put in the ending, especially if she is going to read to herself or her dolls.

But even with some favourite books, completion reading apparently does not necessarily appear as her mother observed:

> Benjamin Bunny is still her favourite book and she often brings it out to be read. She doesn't know it off by heart though. Many books she can fill in words or tell the story, but Benjamin Bunny she just likes to have that read.

The following transcript of Jennifer (3;10) and her mother engaged in completion reading demonstrates how the techniques of pausing was used by the mother at points in the story where she thought that Jennifer could complete the line successfully. The story was Madeline and it had been in the house for approximately three weeks when this recording was made. It was not known on how many occasions it had been read to Jennifer previous to this, but it had become one of her favourite stories so it was assumed that it had been read several times to her. In order to maintain the continuity of the process in operation the mother's reading has been recorded in lower case letters and Jennifer's completion reading has been recorded in upper case letters.

Text	Mother and Jennifer
In an old house in Paris	(M) In an old house in Paris

that was covered with vines	that was covered with -
	(J) VINES
lived twelve little girls	lived - TWELVE LITTLE GIRLS
in two straight lines.	IN TWO STRAIGHT LINES.
In two straight lines	
they broke their bread	THEY BROKE THEIR BREAD
and brushed their teeth	AND BRUSHED THEIR TEETH
and went to bed.	AND WENT TO BED.
They smiled at the good	They smiled - AT THE GOOD
and frowned at the bad	THEY FROWNED AT THE BAD
and sometimes they were	and sometimes they were -
very sad.	VERY SAD.
They left the house	They left the house
at half past nine	At - HALF PAST NINE
in two straight lines	In - TWO STRAIGHT LINES
in rain	In - RAIN - THEY PUT THEIR
	UMBRELLAS UP.
or shine -	or - SHINE
The smallest one was	The - SMALLEST ONE WAS
Madeline.	MADELINE.

It was noticeable that throughout this entire shared reading the mother at no stage attempted to correct Jennifer when she miscued in some way. In the transcript recorded above, there were two high quality miscues, but the reading proceeded in an uninterrupted manner. It can be seen that sometimes a whole sentence was used to cue Jennifer to completing and sometimes only a single word was required. Her 'reading' was fluent and expressive, and she was able to reproduce varying amounts of the story with considerable accuracy.

The book Did You Ever See was given to Jennifer (3;9) and the parents reported that after it had been read only twice, she was able to 'read' the entire story accurately and fluently. She then proceeded to teach her younger brother Christopher (2;4) to 'read' it by using the technique of 'completion reading'. In this transcript

Jennifer's 'reading' has been recorded in lower case letters and Christopher's has been recorded in upper case letters and she started the 'lesson' half way through the book.

Text	Jennifer (3;9) and Christopher (2;4)
Did you ever see a yak? Crack?	(J) Did you ever see a yak? crack? (C) CRACK? This one is going to be a little harder!
Did you ever see a pig? Dig?	Did you ever see a pig? - DUCK. DUCK. Crocodile. DUCK. What is the pig doing? Look at the Piggy's doing. He's digging with the shovel. PLOUGH (?)
Did you ever see a hawk? Talk?	Did you ever see a hawk? - TALK. TALK.
Did you ever see a cat? Bat?	Did you ever see a cat? - BAH! BUH! BAH! BAH! What is it? What is the cat doing? THROWING. Bat. BATTING. BATTING.
Did you ever see a deer? Steer?	Did you ever see a deer? - What is the deer doing? THAT BAT IS BROKEN (Referring to the bat in the previous picture). Ste - Stee - (Jennifer prompting) Steer. Can you see that? (Points to the word). Steer.
Did you ever see a crocodile? Smile?	Did you ever see a crocodile? DUCK. No, it's not a duck. It's a crocodile. CROCODILE. What's the crocodile doing? SMILE.
Did you ever see a fish? Wish?	Did you ever see a fish - What is it? PLOATING (for "Floating"). No. Wish. This was a little harder I think. He doesn't know that one. Did you ever see a fish wish?
Did you ever see a snake? Bake?	Did you ever - what is this? (Points to the word 'snake') That says sss. SWIM AWAY (Chris is probably still thinking of the fish). What is he? He's a kind of animal. What is he? 'NAKE. He said 'nake. Bake. BAKE.
Did you ever see a book? End?	What is this? (Points to the picture) Did you ever see - This is a little harder. What is this one? Did-you-ever-see-a-book-end?

This was Christopher's second attempt to participate in the 'reading' of this story with Jennifer. During her conducting of this 'completion reading' session, Jennifer constantly demonstrated her pride in his achievement, with knowing looks and nods. It can be seen that she anticipated difficulties for him and provided him with clues of various kinds. She gave him initial letter-sound cues ('ste' for 'steer' and 'ssss' for 'snake'), and also gave him meaning-based cues ("It's a kind of animal"). She directed him to the pictures, and even pointed to the words correctly, indicating her awareness that, at this early age, she has developed some awareness of the fact that the print carried the message. As if to demonstrate her understanding of this, she voice and finger pointed accurately as she 'read' the last two pages, which because of its slightly different pattern she recognized as 'being a little harder' for Christopher to manage.

The following two transcripts show how Gillian's mother and father made use of the completion reading technique to facilitate her participation in the shared reading situations. The first story being read was McClintock's, A Fly Went By and only a few samples have been selected from that tape. What the mother said has been recorded in lower case letters and Gillian's (5;5) responses have been recorded in upper case letters:

(M) ... the frog came - (G) FAST. (M) Right!
... and I said - STOP. Stop.
Where's the word 'Stop' (Gillian points
correctly) Right! Can you find it again?
(Gillian has difficulty so the mother
points to the words and reads) Stop! Stop!
Stop!
... I have to get away from - THAT. Right!
I have to run away from - THAT.
That - PIG. That pig.
She wants - ME me.

During this reading, the mother made deliberate pauses where she was sure that Gillian could complete the sentences, provided immediate reinforcement of the correct response by either repeating the word after her or exclaiming "right", in a warm approving manner. She directed her to find a word and praised her for doing so, but as soon as she saw Gillian in difficulty finding the word again the the text, she simply pointed to the words and said them.

On the second last observation visit to Gillian's (5;11) home she was observed in a story-time situation with her father reading Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are. The story had been read to her twice by the investigator since it had been obtained from the library that day. During both of these readings Gillian had participated actively and she commenced the session with the father by 'reading' the title. With his help she 'read' the author's name and repeated this with the title page. Her brother then came and stood beside the chair to watch and Gillian having started reading "The - " (correctly) on the first page, immediately said to her father, "I think you had better read it." He agreed to do this and the following is an edited transcript of part of the interaction that occurred. The father's words are in lower case letters and Gillian's are in upper case letters.

> (Father reads) The night Max wore his wolf suit
> and made mischief of one kind
> and another
> His mother called him wild thing.
> (Gillian interrupts) CAN I SAY IT?
> HIS MOTHER CALLED HIM WILD THING! (Places great emphasis on 'wild', far more than the father)
> And Max said -
> I'M GOING TO EAT YOU UP.
> (Father repeating the first word and stretching it out) I'll -
> I'LL EAT YOU UP. (Correctly this time)
> (Father continues to read)
> ... And when he came to the place where the wild things are, they roared their terrible roars
> (Gillian interrupts again) CAN I SAY THAT?
> THEY ROARED THEIR TERRIBLE ROARS. AND GNASHED THEIR TERRIBLE TEETH.
> That's right! (Father shows surprise and approval)
> GNASHED THEIR TERRIBLE TEETH. AND ROLLED THEIR EYES - AND - SHOWED THEIR TERRIBLE CLAWS.
> Very good! (Father shows approval again).
> Till Max said - BE STILL!

The fact that her brother had joined them for the story probably dissuaded Gillian from attempting to 'read' it independently but once the father had commenced reading she soon became involved in the story and seemed to forget his presence. The father read the story at an unusually fast pace which caused her to have to request him to stop on occasions to allow her to participate. It was particularly interesting to observe her 'correct' his use of intonation by placing more stress on the word 'wild'. Her father helped her correct a high quality miscue without telling her that she had 'read' the sentence incorrectly and demonstrated immediate and obvious pleasure at her ability to 'read' quite a difficult section in the story, despite the fact that she had miscued occasionally.

Kaaren and Sean had considerably less opportunities to engage in participatory activity during their bedtime stories due to the book selection policies of their mother. There was an increasing number of stories that she was prepared to reread with them and one of these was *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Kaaren (4;5) knew the story far better than Sean (3;1) and was able to participate quite extensively in it when it was read. She 'read' the last part of this transcript at a great pace almost certainly in order to prevent Sean from participating. The mother's reading has been recorded in lower case letters. Sean's in underlined lower case letters and Kaaren's in upper case letters.

Text	Mother, Sean (3;1) and Kaaren (4;5)
On Monday,	(M) On - (S) *Tu* (M) Monday
he ate through one apple	(K) HE ATE THROUGH ONE APPLE
but he was still hungry.	but - HE WAS STILL HUNGRY.
On Tuesday,	On - *Tuesday*
he ate through two pears	he ate through two PEARS
but he was still hungry.	but HE WAS STILL HUNGRY (Sean tries to mumble along with Kaaren).
On Wednesday,	On - *Tu* Wednesday,
he ate three plums	HE ATE THROUGH THREE GRAPES I MEAN PLUMS.

but he was still hungry.	but he was - STILL HUNGRY (Sean says these words with Kaaren).
On Thursday,	On Thursday
he ate through	HE ATE THROUGH (Sean participates correctly and then stops)
four strawberries but he was still hungry.	FOUR STRAWBERRIES but HE WAS STILL HUNGRY.
On Friday,	On Tuesday (uncertainly) What's after Thursday? Friday. Friday
he ate through five oranges	HE ATE THROUGH FIVE ORANGES
but he was still hungry	BUT HE WAS STILL HUNGRY. (Sean comes in on the last word).
On Saturday,	On - Tues Saturday -
he ate through one piece of	HE ATE THROUGH ONE PIECE OF
chocolate cake,	CAKE,
one ice cream cone,	ONE ICE CREAM CONE (Kaaren 'reads' faster and faster as Sean had started trying to 'read' with her).
one pickle, one slice of cheese, one slice of salami,	ONE PICKLE, ONE PIECE OF CHEESE, ONE PIECE OF SALAMI,
one lollipop, one piece of	ONE LOLLIPOP, ONE PIECE OF
cherry pie, one sausage,	CHERRY PIE, ONE SAUSAGE,
one cup cake, and one slice	ONE CUP CAKE, ONE PIECE
of water melon.	OF WATER MELON.
That night he had	THIS NIGHT HE HAD
a stomach ache.	A STOMACH ACHE.

This transcript gave us a good example of how little cueing the mother had to provide for Kaaren in particular to complete the various sentences. She seemed to know just how much to give and when to give it. Sean was consistent with his offering of "Tuesday" for each day of the week, and it was noticeable that Kaaren at no stage attempted to participate at this point probably because of past failures. She was much more familiar with the story than Sean however, and although she miscued several times during her last burst of 'reading', all but one of these could be classified as a high quality miscue. On one occasion she was able to correct one of her miscues ('plums' for 'grapes'), almost certainly as a result of using picture clues. Her 'reading' was extremely fluent and expressive and she demonstrated great confidence in reproducing the meaning of this section of the story.

These examples of completion reading provide an indication of both how and when it was used by the parents during the story-time situation. Unfortunately they were not asked why they provided this type of opportunity for the children to participate in the reading but from observing the behaviour it seemed to be an instinctive outcome of reading certain kinds of stories repeatedly and the children beginning quite naturally to participate in this reading by saying the parts they knew along with them. As the children demonstrated increasing control over their stories, they provided them with fewer and fewer cues.

Perhaps the most important feature of this behaviour lay in the fact that the children seemed to want to engage in it of their own volition. They appeared to almost deliberately use the technique to gain greater and greater accuracy and fluency in their efforts to reproduce the story for themselves. Sometimes they would commence to use the behaviour during the first reading of a story.

Jennifer (3;8) for example was read My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes by the investigator for the first time. As the repetitive title line was read and reread throughout the story she gradually reproduced more and more of it, starting with "boxes", until she finally said the whole line apart from the introductory "But...". She was also coming in which some of the endings of other repetitive lines. She did this quite naturally, without any direction and appeared to enjoy it greatly. Completion reading then, would appear to be another important strategy, used by very young children in their efforts to gain not only more enjoyment from their shared book experiences, but to provide them with another means of "making their books their own".

Echo reading. Whereas mumble and completion reading seemed to materialize quite naturally and unconsciously in the emergent reading behaviours of the children involved in this study, echo reading appeared to be used by Gillian at least, almost consciously and deliberately as a method of helping her to learn larger amounts of the story and as a means whereby she could exercise some control over the process. Echo reading occurred when the children repeated something that had been read to them immediately after they had heard it. Sometimes it was only a word but more often a phrase or a sentence was repeated as if to echo what had just been said.

The behaviour was first observed when Gillian (4;6) was being read Meet Babar and His Family by the investigator. A number of pages had been read to her and she had echo read one sentence spontaneously and had engaged in a great deal of mumble reading. The investigator continued to read with the following result:

I: The flowers and the fruit are especially beautiful this year. Babar waters his garden faithfully. (Gillian mumble read along with the investigator up to this point).
G: O.K. Stop talking (Reading). (She then mumbled some words which sounded like the previous sentence).
I: Can you say that? (Reads) Babar waters his garden faithfully.
G: Babar waters his garden faithfully.
I: The children help him
G: The children help him
I: in their own way.
G: in their own way.
I: But that rascal Arthur loves to play tricks.
G: (Mumble read part of the line) - loves to play tricks.

Gillian reverted to mumble reading again at this point and a few pages later started echo reading sentences and parts of sentences of no more than six words in length. Throughout the story she switched from mumble reading to echo reading and would occasionally try to predict what was coming next by following on from her echo reading, as in these examples:

I: (Reading) But suddenly -
G: But suddenly it starts to rain.
I: The rain pours down.
G: The rain pours down.

And later:

I: Hoping to catch -
G: Hoping to catch Santa Claus.
I: A glimpse of Santa Claus.
G: A glimpse of Santa Claus.

There were a number of features of this behaviour and its spontaneous appearance, that seemed to be important in relation to the development of Gillian's reading-like behaviour. The fact that it appeared at all was in itself significant. Gillian, up until this stage, had almost invariably been read to in the company of her brother and in this situation, she was being read to alone. This may have prompted her to try to use it as a technique to help her "learn" the story. Its unrehearsed and self-directed appearance was also interesting. The parents reported that she had never employed the technique with either or them, and in fact, it did not materialize again until a year and five months later, when she used it with her mother, and subsequently with the investigator. Her use of it as a spring-board to try and 'read' more of the story was minimal at this stage but as can be seen in later transcripts, she employed it as a technique to gain control over her stories, much more systematically. The amount that she could remember appeared to be up to six words, but she was more comfortable with three or four words at a time. If she was presented with more than approximately six words, she reverted to mumble reading.

Echo reading at this stage, was used by Gillian (4;6) in quite a deliberate manner. She organized the conditions for it to occur and she seemed to be using it specifically to gain greater mastery over this favourite story, which had been read to her on only a few occasions previously. Seventeen months later she followed the same procedure with her mother, again with a new addition to their library of books.

A series of Reading Log entries recorded by the mother indicated that echo reading had reappeared in Gillian's (5;11) behaviour with books.

> Apr. 24
> She (Gillian) dragged out"Button Soup"to read again. We did half the story together. She read each sentence after me. Had to remind her to watch the words.
>
> Apr. 26
> ... Then we read the second half of"Button Soup." She read each sentence after me. Took a while, but she insisted on completing the task she set for herself.
>
> May 2
> Read Disney's "Mowgli and the Lost Elephant Child". She read each page after me - requiring assistance with unfamiliar words (her suggestion). She appears to be making a bit of progress with breaking the words down phonetically.

As a result of these entries, Gillian's mother was asked how the echo reading was initiated. She indicated that she had been reading Button Soup for the third time (it was a new book in the house) and was approximately half way through it when Gillian had stopped her with, "Just a minute. Wait now. I want to read it." The mother reported that she then had her read and she read the section immediately after her. Gillian had never done this before with either the mother or the father, and the only reason that her mother could give for its appearance was that she was now reading to Gillian regularly on her own every morning, because Gregory had started school and this allowed her to participate on a far greater basis than ever before.

During this same visit, Gillian (5;11) brought Button Soup to the investigator, who at this stage did not know that echo reading had materialized again in her behaviour. The following rather lengthy transcript indicates how she used it with him. Gillian had opened the book at the first page:

G: But first you've got to read - Hmm - this, then I have to - and then when you've finished, I have to read after you. (Sets up the rules for echo reading)
I: I see (Started reading but read too much for her to remember). A long time ago a traveller named Daisy was riding a stage coach out West. Are you going to read after me?
G: Yes.
I: (Reread, but again read too much for Gillian to remember). A long time ago a traveller named Daisy was riding a stage coach out West. Do you want to read that sentence, or what. (Another problem for her memory to deal with).
G: Hmm. O.K. A long time ago - (her memory fails her)
I: a traveller named Daisy -
G: a traveller named Daisy

I: was riding a stage coach out West.
G: was riding a stage coach out West.
I: She was going to visit her old Uncle Scrooge.
G: She was going to visit her old Uncle Scrooge. Daisy-was-tired-and-very (prompted by investigator) thirsty-and very- (promoted again) hungry. ('Reads' without the sentence being read to her, and does so very deliberately using voice pointing).
I: She can hardly wait -
G: She can hardly wait to get to her uncle's house. (Again takes over the reading, using the first part of the sentence to cue her memory. She miscued on "get to" which in the text was "reach"). "There's a hotel," he said, "If you look so tired and hungry you should move to the hotel." (A reconstruction of the text. She then interprets what she has just 'read'). "Cos you know, he (Uncle Scrooge) doesn't like visitors. (The investigator waited for Gillian to continue, since she had been 'reading' so much).
Go ahead! (She "orders" him to read some more).
I: When the stage coach pulled into town (Gillian starts with "When" but the investigator reads on to the end of the sentence). everyone came out to see who was on it.
G: When the stage coach - (Her memory fails her).
I: Pulled into town
G: Pulled into town
I: Everyone came out
G: Everyone came out to see who was in it. Goofy the sheriff stepped out and helped her out. (Takes over the 'reading' again. Makes sense of the text but does not reproduce it exactly).
I: "Howdy," he said
G: "Howdoody!" (Places great emphasis on the final syllable correcting the investigator's intonation) he said.

Apart from demonstrating how a five year old girl was able to direct, regulate and organize her own efforts to learn to 'read' a story, this transcript provided a view of a range of reading behaviours in various stages of development. Gillian was 'reading' with great confidence and fluency and was using intonation patterns which were obviously superior to those being used by the investigator. Her 'miscues' were invariably both syntactically and semantically acceptable and she was prepared to provide an interpretation at the inferential level ('Cos you know, he doesn't like visitors.) when she thought the meaning was not clear. On one occasion she switched to voice pointing so that she could stay with the print more precisely, and probably, by trying to make use of the visual information on the page, rather than her memory and contextual clues, she had difficulty with a word. The investigator however, gave her little opportunity to use any strategies that she may have been able to employ, by failing to give her any time to do so. Gillian continued to 'read' the whole book in this vigorous and enthusiastic manner, and it was obvious that she was setting out quite aggressively to master it in as short a time as possible.

Whereas Button Soup had no repetitive language, and its verbal content was quite extensive and relatively unpredictable, Kraus' Whose Mouse Are You, presented a much easier learning task for Gillian (5;11). It contained highly predictable, repetitive and rhyming patterns of language with specific support from the illustrations. During the same visit, this story was read to her once by another visitor to the house, using echo reading techniques, again at Gillian's request, and she was then able to 'read' it independently with only occasional minor assistance.

Echo reading was a strategy that Gillian had begun to use seventeen months previously, but due to the restrictions imposed on her active participation in the shared book experience by her brother, her use of it had not surfaced again until her mother commenced reading to her on her own, on a regular basis. She undoubtedly found it more efficient than using mumble or completion reading techniques and was able to learn far greater chunks of the story at a time. More importantly however, rather than wait for the person reading to her to pause and let her participate, by using echo reading she could state the "rules" and establish control of the situation, echoing the reader and then continuing on 'reading' for as long as she could. When her memory or other cueing systems failed her, she simply ordered the reader to continue and the procedure was repeated. The picture of this young girl managing her own learning was a very clear one.

The other children involved in the study appeared to make only incidental use of echo reading, although Jennifer's mother actually used the term in the initial interview by explaining that "Sometimes she (Jennifer) likes to echo read". In a Reading Log entry she recorded, "After I read the words on each page Jennifer would point to the words and run her finger from left to right across the page and repeat the words" (Nov. 17).

Kaaren and Sean used the technique intermittently and generally only with single words or short statements such as "Lift off" "Boom" and "Goodbye" in Meg on the Moon and with a "Hello Jack", "Hello Jake" sequence in another of their books. On one occasion however, the mother read a poem entitled "Halfway Dressed" to them and both Kaaren (4;() and Sean (315) started to echo read with her quite naturally. The following is the transcript of part of that reading:

M: 'Cos the neck hole grabs
K and S: ('Reading' in unison)
'Cos the neck hole grabs
M: Like as if it's glue
K and S: Like as if it's glue
M: And my ears don't like it
K and S: my ears don't like it
M: And my nose don't too.
K and S: And my nose don't too.

It can be seen that the length of the lines and the rhyming nature of the poem made it very suitable for this type of shared reading activity, and the children obviously enjoyed the experience.

Echo reading then, was yet another strategy that these children, used to make favourite stories accessible to themselves through reading-like behaviour. It was seen operating most clearly in Gillian's case where she used it quite skillfully and artfully to gain much more control over the processes involved in mastering a story. The increasing amount of participation that developed as a result of all three techniques being used, mumble, completion and echo reading has been examined under the heading of cooperative reading in the following section of this report.

Cooperative reading. Cooperative reading, as the label implies, involved a sharing of the reading of the story by both the participants. Sometimes the reading was in unison or near unison, with one of the readers saying the words fractionally behind the other one. Sometimes one reader took the lead and read independently and sometimes the other did that. Cooperative reading, as it was observed in the children involved in this study, seemed to be the technique that they used to attempt to gain more complete control over their favourite stories. Even though they could retrieve larger amounts of a particular story independently, they would still ask for it to be reread to them. They would then proceed to "read along" with the reader, participating as much as they could throughout the reading.

The technique of cooperative reading is difficult to demonstrate in a written form since much of the reading is done in unison or near unison. In order to indicate where this was occurring, lines have been bracketed in the following transcripts and the relative positions of the words on each of the lines indicates which person was leading in the reading. Where there was a normal dialogue or one person was reading (or 'reading') independently, the transcription has been recorded in an orthodox manner.

The following transcript resulted from Gillian (5;7) and the investigator cooperatively reading her personalized story, Bambi, Thumper and Me:

G: Now I know that I can read some of this.
(Reads the title on the title page) Bambi,
Thumper and Me.
I: There's the name of the story. (Points to
the title).
G: You read this. O.K.? (Points to the
explanation of the book under the title.
Proceeds to read along with the investigator).
I: {This Is a Read-About- Me Story Adventure
G: { This Is a Read About Me Story that has Adventure

I: {That Happened to
G: { That Happened to Gillian - (Gillian said her
{surname)

I: { With love from Ian, Heather and Bruce
G: {With love from Ian, Heather and Bruce

The story was then read relatively slowly by the investigator while Gillian 'read' along, taking over the lead from time to time. When she did that the investigator stopped reading, as can be seen in the following transcripts:

I: {They could hear Peter Pan's voice faintly
G: { hear Peter Pan's voice faintly

I: {calling after them
G: { calling after them, "I'll be back
G: for you soon."

And later in the story:

I: "How would you like living alone in the forest
G: How would you like living alone in the forest

I: with no one to talk to," she cried.
with no one to talk to she cried. "Not only

I:
G: that, June the 15th was my birthday and no one
Text: that, but June 15 was my birthday and no one

I:
G: remembered. So I'm just taking the gifts
Text: remembered. I was just taking the gifts

I:
G: that she, that they forgot to give me," she explained.
Text: that everyone forgot to give me," explained

I:
G:
Text: the poor fairy.

From these transcripts it can be seen that indistinct mumble reading had disappeared and Gillian was 'reading' along quite fluently with the investigator, using the initial sounds of the words to stimulate her recall. At times she would catch up and read in unison, would move ahead on occasions and then continue on, 'reading' independently. Her reproduction of the story was usually very accurate and the miscues that she made, invariably did not change the meaning of the story and were syntactically acceptable. Her attempted self correction ("that she" to "that they" for "that every one") retained the meaning of the text more accurately. When 'reading' independently, she made excellent use of intonation and her phrasing was entirely suitable. Apart from seemingly not using the visual information on the pages, Gillian was displaying all the qualities of a skilled adult reader, and was able to maintain these throughout the cooperative reading of the whole book.

Gillian (5;7) followed a rather different procedure when 'reading' with her father. In the following transcript however, she was using a story that she knew very well, (Three Little Kittens), and it would appear that she may have been trying to make more use of the visual information on the page.

Text: And they began to cry.
G: ('Reading') They - (mumbles an approximation for the words).
F: That's right. And they -
G: They began to cry.
F: Right!

Text: Oh mother dear we sadly fear our mittens we have lost.
G: Oh-mother-dear-
F: We-
G: We-sadly fear our-mittens- we-(very deliberate voice pointing).
F: We- That's right. That's the same word isn't it?
G: We-have-
F: What did they do with their mittens?
G: Lost!
F: Sure! They lost them didn't they!

Text: What! Lost your mittens. You naughty kittens.
G: What! Lost your mittens. You naughty kittens! (Long pause)
F: Uh Huh. (Turns the page) What's over here?

Text: Then you shall have no pie.
G: You-
F: Then
G: Then-
F: You
G: You-should-have-no-pie.
F: Right! (Despite the miscue of "should" for "shall").

As Gillian continued on through the story she stopped voice pointing and 'read' much more fluently and needed far less cooperative activity on the part of the father.

Later during the same visit Gillian (5;7) was observed 'reading' with her mother using a book that had been just read to her. It was a Disney Club book entitled The Ear Book and it had been a favourite several years previously. The mother could not remember the last occasion it had been read. During the first reading by the mother, Gillian had participated to only a limited extent, but apparently, having had her memory of it revived she decided to try and 'read' it herself:

M: Do you remember that story?
G: Yeah. I'll try to read it.
M: If you like.

Text: The Ear Book. Tick tock, tick tock.
G: The Ear Book. Tock
M: Tick.
G: Tick tock, tick tock.

Text: Our ears hear a clock.
G: Our (pronounced like "ah") ears hear -
M: (Interrupting) No. Our -
G: Our -
M: ears
G: hear a clock.
M: Right!

Text: Our ears hear water, drop drop drop.
M: Our -
G: Our ears hear water, drip drip.
M: (Laughing) What's that? (Points to the words "drop", "drop", "drop")
G: drop drop drop (To reinforce her memory)

Text: Our ears hear popcorn, pop pop pop.
M: There's that word again - Our -
G: Our ears hear popcorn, pop pop pop

Text: Ears - ears - ears - ears
M: That's all the same words. What's that? (Pointing to the word in the title)
G: Ears - ears - ears - ears

The cooperative reading continued for a few more pages in this manner with Gillian 'reading' as much as she could independently and her mother prompting, and at times directing her to the visual information on the pages, frequently by referring back to words previously 'read'. Later in the story Gillian 'read' more fluently, with much less help from the mother, but at times reconstructing the text in her own words.

Throughout all these cooperative reading sessions, which were obviously varied in nature, because of the different degrees of familiarity she had with the stories and the different people who were reading with her, Gillian's energy, enthusiasm and confidence never flagged. A noticeable feature of her reading was its varying degrees of fluency. With her personalized book Bambi, Thumper and Me her 'reading' was constantly fluent and she appeared to be concentrating on remembering and reproducing the text, without giving any attention to the available visual information which was extensive in nature. With the Three Little Kittens, which she could have 'read' with ease, had she followed the same procedure, she used a voice pointing strategy much more and her 'reading' was far less fluent and rather hesitant. Here she seemed to be trying to use the visual information, in order to 'read' accurately, and in so doing was unable to make use of her memory for the text. The Ear Book posed a different problem as her recall of the text was not as secure as that for the Three Little Kittens, since the book had not been off the shelf for a long period of time. Coupled with that, her mother was attempting to have her use the visual information while she was trying to remember the text. As soon as she reverted to 'reading' fluently, neither parent interrupted her, despite the fact that she was miscueing from time to time.

Jennifer and her mother used cooperative reading differently from Gillian and her parents. There were very few occasions when Jennifer read in unison with either of her parents and the following transcript was rather more typical of what happened when the reading was shared in this family. The mother had asked Jennifer (3;9) if she wanted to read Galdone's The Three Bears with her but Jennifer had declined saying "I just want you to read". Within a few lines however, she was participating with the appropriate words as her mother paused from time to time to encourage her to do so. As the story progressed Jennifer began to share the reading more and more, as the following transcript demonstrates.

M: (Reading) The Middle-Sized Bear looked at her porridge but -
Text: "SOMEBODY HAS BEEN TASTING MY PORRIDGE", said the Middle-Sized Bear in her middle-sized voice.
J: "Somebody has been - (M: tasting) - my porridge,"

Text: The Little Wee Bear looked at his porridge bowl. "SOMEBODY HAS BEEN TASTING MY PORRIDGE AND HAS EATEN IT ALL UP!"
J: (In a "tiny wee" voice) "Somebody has been tasting my porridge and ate it all up!"

M: cried the Little Wee Bear in his little wee voice. The three bears went into the parlour. What did the Big Bear say?
Text: "SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!"
J: (In a deep voice) "Somebody has been sitting in my chair!"

Her mother continued through the remainder of the story in this manner, asking what each bear said and Jennifer was able to respond appropriately on each occasion, although not always with the exact words in the text. Her mother however, never attempted to correct her and simply accepted her rendition and continued with the story.

Jennifer's 'reading' of these parts of The Three Bears was extremely expressive as she took the role of each bear by using different voice levels. She was obviously relying totally on her memory of the story and at no stage did she switch to voice or finger pointing. Her mother made no demands on her for correct responses and a warm, sharing atmosphere pervaded the experience.

Like Jennifer, Kaaren and Sean were seldom observed reading along with either of their parents in the manner that Gillian did. The one story with which cooperative reading did occur, was The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Since it was one of the few stories that was reread with any frequency it also provided examples of other kinds of active participation on the part of these children. When the following recording was made the story had been read on a number of occasions previously and Kaaren (4;5) was more familiar with it than Sean (3;1).

Text: In the light of the moon a little egg lay on a leaf.
K: {Mumble 'reads'
S: {Mumble 'reads' - the moon
M: (Praises their effort and rereads from the beginning. The children mumble 'read' along with her intermittently).
In the light of the moon a little egg lay on a leaf.

Text: On Sunday morning, the warm sun came up and - pop - out of the egg came a tiny and very hungry caterpillar.
S: Sunday was pop and there was a little caterpillar comed out of that little thing.
M: (Praises Sean for his effort and tries to persuade Kaaren to let him continue to 'read'. She refuses and attempts to 'read' the same line).
K: Out of the little white egg on Sunday morning out popped a little caterpillar.

And later in the story:

Text: He built a small house called a cocoon, around himself. He stayed inside for more than two weeks.
K: ('Reading' but misses out the first sentence). He stayed in more than two weeks.
M: (Reads both sentences after Kaaren had 'read' and children join in on the word "cocoon" only).

Text: The he nibbled a hole in the cocoon and and pushed his way out and -

M: (Reads this and Sean joined in on "nibbled a hole". Mother pauses on "and").

Text: he was a beautiful butterfly.
K: turned into a butterfly.
S: (Echoed Kaaren) turned into a butterfly.
M: (Rereads) he was a beautiful - (pauses)
K: butterfly!
S: butterfly!

Kaaren then wanted to reread the last page and the mother encouraged her by having her point to the words as she read it and then the mother pointed as Kaaren 'read'.

Throughout the cooperative reading the mother was warmly supportive of the children's efforts and although she reread some of the sections that had been 'misread' by Kaaren, she made no comment concerning her miscues and the session flowed on smoothly. It can be seen that at the beginning of the story the principles of approximation and attempting to reproduce meaning were operating with both children, but in the last section, Kaaren at least was able to 'read' with some degree of accuracy, except for omitting whole sentences. On the last line however, she reverted to producing meaning again rather than an accurate rendition of the text, but once her mother had reread it Kaaren decided that she wanted to learn to 'read' it correctly also.

Like the other participatory techniques already described, cooperative reading provided the children with the opportunity to take an active role in the story-time reading.

But whereas certain aspects of completion and echo reading put the children in a rather dependent role, cooperative reading provided for a more equal partnership in this shared reading experience. The children were encouraged to participate as much as they could without waiting necessarily for cues from the parent reader. The atmosphere that was present in these sessions was always supportive and seldom corrective and the children appeared to be encourage to experiment and approximate in their attempts to reproduce their stories.

Cooperative reading then, gave the children the means whereby they could 'read' their stories with as much or as little help as they needed. The unison and near unison read-along techniques employed by Gillian allowed her to take over the leading role wherever she felt able to do so. The approaches used by the parents of Jennifer, Kaaren and Sean, encouraged them to "try their hand" at 'reading'. They had an accompanying parent to help them over any difficult spots and reread accurately for them if necessary. In Gillian's case it seemed that she was using her parents to actually attempt to read her old favourites, as she endeavoured to make increasing use of the visual information on the page. The situations however were never instructional in the formal and deliberate sense of the word and simply provide another spontaneous means for books to be shared by children and their parents.

The Characteristics of Reading-Like Behaviour

Reading-like behaviour possesses two major characteristics. In its initial stage it is usually fluent and expressive but as the children gain more experience with rereading their favourite books, their reading-like behaviour, at times loses its fluency and they adopt a word-by-word 'reading' strategy.

In this section of this chapter the characteristics of fluent, reading-like behaviour, which seems to have as its main goal, the reproduction of the meaning of their stories by the children, have been examined more carefully. The subsequent appearance of the much more deliberate eye-ear-voice-matching-type 'reading' with its associated effect on such factors as self-correction, 'miscues', and the increased use of visual information on the page has been studied also in some depth, through the transcripts of the children engaged in using this kind of reading-like behaviour.

Reproducing Meaning

Reference has already been made in the previous section of this report to the children's ability to retell the stories that have been read to them, sometimes in considerable detail. From the experience of being read to regularly, they were able to begin building their schemata for the structure of various kinds of stories and their first attempts at retrieving these for themselves were characterized by reproducing their meaning, rather than an exact verbal replica. By doing this the children were demonstrating their capacity to listen to written language, engage in a deep level processing, and reproduce the meaning of what they heard using many of their own syntactical structures. The data recorded in this section demonstrate how these children had gone about learning to do this.

The following transcript was recorded when Sean (3;1) and Kaaren (4;5) were cooperatively reading The Very Hungry Caterpillar with their mother. Kaaren had just completed 'reading' an extensive section of the story at a great pace, and Sean appeared determined to attempt to 'read' some as well, and to do so before his sister regained her breath.

Text	Sean
The next day was Sunday again.	But Tuesday (self-corrects)
	On Tuesday
The caterpillar ate through	he ate through
one nice green leaf,	one green leaf
and then he felt much better.	and den he feeled better.

In this brief example of Sean's reading-like behaviour it can be seen that this 3 year old boy had engaged in a sophisticated level of processing. His false start was quickly corrected as he realised that the conjunction "But" would not be syntactically acceptable for the remainder of the sentence, so he reread, starting with the more acceptable preposition. Since every day of the week was "Tuesday" to Sean, his miscue on "Sunday" was understandable and both syntactically and semantically acceptable. He substituted the pronoun "he" for the noun "caterpillar" which maintained both the meaning and the syntax of the sentence and used his present level of knowledge of past tense markers by saying "feeled" for "felt", having not yet gained control in his oral language of the irregular form of the verb. Added to all this, he constructed a clever précis of the original two sentences and reproduced them as one, maintaining the meaning but omitting the adjectival embellishments. Sean was not recalling the story at the verbal level, he was striving to reproduce meaning.

Jennifer (3;10), in the following transcript of her efforts to 'read' The Three Bears, exhibited a similar kind of processing.

Text	Jennifer
"Somebody has been sitting in my chair and has sat right through it!" cried the Little Wee Bear in his little wee voice. The three bears went into the bedroom.	And the baby bear said, "Somebody was sitting in my chair and broke it all to pieces!" ('Read' in a "little wee" voice).
"Somebody has been lying in my bed!" said the Great Big Bear in his great big voice.	And they went into their bedroom. And the Daddy said, "Somebody was sleeping in my bed!" ('Read' in a very deep voice).
"Somebody has been lying in my bed!" said the Middle-Sized Bear in her middle-sized voice.	And the Mummy said, "Somebody was sleeping in my bed!" ('Read' in a "middle-sized" voice).

"Somebody has been lying in my bed and here she is!" cried the Little Wee Bear in his little wee voice.	And the Baby one said, "Somebody was sleeping in my bed and here she is!" ('Read' in a "little wee" voice).

This young girl's rendition of a favourite story demonstrated her ability to take the main sequence of the plot, maintain its development perfectly, and reproduce its meaning exactly, all the time using the written language code to represent it. Although she has consistently altered the verbs in the passage she maintained the original tense of these in her substitutions. She skillfully rearranged the introduction of the direct speech and throughout her fluent 'reading', used a sophisticated level of phrasing and pattern of intonation to convey her meaning. She demonstrated complete confidence in her ability to 'read' these pages of this favourite story and showed great satisfaction as a result of her performance. Jennifer was reproducing the meaning of her story and was enjoying the process of doing so.

In the previous section of this chapter, a transcript of Kaaren's (4;5) attempt to cooperatively 'read' the first two lines of The Very Hungry Caterpillar was seen. The following transcript was recorded one month earlier and demonstrated an even more compressed effort:

Text	Kaaren
The Very Hungry Caterpillar	The Very Very Hungry Caterpillar
In the light of the moon a little egg lay on a leaf.	One time there was an egg.
On Sunday morning, the warm sun came up and - pop - out of the egg came a tiny and very hungry caterpillar.	And out popped a little caterpillar.
He started to look for some food.	
On Monday, he ate through one apple	one apple - (her memory fails her).

Here we see Kaaren (4;4) confidently elaborating the title of the story, placing great emphasis on the "Very Very Hungry Caterpillar" and then stripping away all the adornment of the first two sentences and presenting only the bare ideas contained in them. Prompted by the picture clues she then moved through to the "fruit" sequence in the story, omitting a complete sentence and part of another, before she gave up and had to be prompted.

Three months later, Kaaren (4;7) wanted to try and 'read' the same story again having had it read to her on many occasions during the intervening period and also having attempted to 'read' it herself from time to time. She had asked the investigator if she could "read the whole thing" to which he readily agreed, saying that he "wouldn't say anything". The following is part of the transcript of her 'reading':

Text	Kaaren
The Very Hungry Caterpillar	The Very Hungry Caterpillar
In the light of the moon	(After pausing, says to the investigator, "You can read this because this is a hard part." The investigator reads, "In the light -) (K): of the
a little egg lay on a leaf.	moon a little egg stood on a leaf.
One Sunday morning, the warm sun came up	The sun was coming up and out (self-corrects)
and - pop-	and - pop -
out of the egg came a tiny very hungry caterpillar.	out of the sun came a came a very hungry caterpillar.
He started to look for some food.	He started to look for some food.
On Monday, he ate through -	On Wednesday, he ate through -

It can be seen that Kaaren has been able to reproduce a great deal more of the story on this occasion and only a relatively minor section of the original was omitted. She requested some prompting initially, but once started, she managed to keep going without very much difficulty until some later sections in the story. Her 'miscues' of 'stood' for 'lay' and 'sun' for 'egg' were syntactically acceptable but were only marginally semantically acceptable. Her 'Wednesday' for 'Monday' was another high quality 'miscue', and her change of 'was coming' for 'came' did not result in any serious alterations to the meaning of the sentence. Throughout the 'reading' Kaaren's performance was expressive and effortless and she made excellent use of appropriate phrasing and intonation patterns. She was well-satisfied with her performance and commented that this was 'her favourite story'.

Numerous examples of Gillian reproducing meaning as she engaged in 'reading' her stories were obtained during the course of the period of the observations in her home. Probably the best example was recorded during her 'reading' of her personalized book *Bambi, Thumper and Me* which she received a month previously. This transcript demonstrated Gillian's (5;7) ability to reconstruct one of her favourite stories making sophisticated and fluent use of the patterns of written language in her efforts to maintain the flow of the story. The sections that she reconstructed have been underlined for the purpose of clarity.

Test	Gillian
"My tail!" exclaimed Thumper.	"My tail!" exclaimed Thumper.
"*What's wrong with my tail*?"	"*Why don't you like it*?"
A look of surprise came over	A look of surprise came over
the little rabbit's face	the little rabbit's face.
when he turned around and	"*My tail!" he said. "It's*
discovered it was gone.	*gone*!"
Then, while they were	*When they* were
trying to figure out	trying to figure out
what had happened,	what had happened,
	over Thumper's tail
Bambi's spots began to	Bambi's spots began to
float *from* his back	float *off* his back
and fly through the air.	*into the forest*.
"My spots!" cried Bambi.	"My spots!" cried Bambi.
"They're *flying* away".	"They're *floating* away".
And they all began *running*	And they all began to *run*
after the spots.	after the spots.
It was *rough* travelling,	It was *hard* travelling,
for the little spots	for the (little) spots
were darting through	*had been going* through
the forest, *springing over*	the forest, *over logs*.
high bushes and slipping	(Voice indicated uncertainty
under fallen logs.	here).

A careful examination of the text and the accompanying transcript demonstrates how skillful this little five year old girl had become at generating written language "on the run." She was not engaged in a process of simply imitating and remembering. She was engaged in a process of creating and composing written language as a product of her past experience with that form of language, coupled with her memory for the text. Her skillful transformation from the reported speech of "when he turned around and discovered it was gone" to direct speech in "My tail!" he said. "It's gone!" while making all the relevant amendments for the necessary grammatical agreement, was a clear indication of the language competence that Gillian has developed and the deep level processing that was occurring. Her rendition could even be considered to improve the original by providing more impact for the event being described.

Gillian's display of mature reading-like behaviour contained all the elements, except for using the available visual information, of the fluent adult reader. In the process of reproducing this story she was constantly and intuitively predicting ahead, since there was no other way that she could have maintained her smooth, controlled production of language. Her apt use of phrasing and intonation patterns indicated a high level of meaning reproduction, and the expressive quality that she was able to bring to her reading was far removed from the word-by-word monotone so often heard being used by young children who are learning to read as a result of instruction along traditional lines. Finally her attitude towards the task was extremely positive and she displayed great personal satisfaction when she completed her 'reading'.

The most outstanding characteristic of the children's reading-like behaviour when recovering their favourite stories in this manner, was their constant striving to reproduce meaning. Their drive was not one of trying to retrieve their story in the exact words of the original, but was one of generating language, using their own resources to reconstruct the meaning of their story. In so doing they displayed the effects of participating regularly in stories that had been read to them by being able to reproduce meaning using the structures and patterns of written language. Their ability to do this seemed to have reached an automatic level of processing since they were able to maintain their rendering of their stories at a surprisingly high level of fluency. Their ability to deal with the 'non-visual information' (Smith, 1973, p. 6) of written language in this natural manner, using meaning, their schema for the major structures of stories and their sensitivity to what was syntactically acceptable in written language, would serve them well when they began to use the 'visual information' (Smith, 1973, p. 6) to read what was on the page in the true sense of the word. The aspect of reading-like behaviour that would take them a step closer to this complex process has been examined in the following section.

Accurate Reproduction: Developing Attention to Visual Information

In their early attempts to retrieve their favourite stories for themselves, the children involved in this study concentrated on reproducing meaning and were not overly concerned with accurately reproducing the text at the verbal level. As they engaged in cooperatively re-reading a story however, their control over its reproduction at the surface level of the words seemed to grow. Once semantic confidence and completeness for the story had been achieved it seemed that they were ready to learn to reproduce it more accurately.

The motivation to achieve this higher level of accurate reproduction of a story appeared to be derived from two main sources. As they 'read' their stories cooperatively with their parents or simply sat and listened to them again and again (almost certainly participating at a covert level), they became aware that their rendition of the story did not match what they were hearing. Gradually their own performance became more accurate, as was seen in Kaaren's improved reproduction over a period of three months with the first few pages of her favourite story

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, reported in the last section of this chapter. Many other examples of this type of improvement were observed occurring in the children's reading-like behaviour during the course of this study. Their parents also were observed encouraging them in their efforts to retrieve their stories more accurately.

The other factor that seemed to stimulate the desire of the children to reproduce their favourite stories more accurately at the word level, appeared to come from their growing awareness of the fact that what they were saying had to match what was in the print on the page. This was clearly demonstrated in the transcript of Gillian (5;11) recorded in the previous chapter (p. 349), where she stated during a cooperative reading of Button Soup that: "I think I can read now" and proceeded to "stay with the print" as she 'read' the selection, checking her matching all the time through switching to and from fluent reading to a careful voice pointing.

The accurate reproduction of favourite books by these children, through reading-like behaviour had two main characteristics: a fluent 'reading' where the children emulated the adult model using sophisticated patterns of phrasing and intonation to convey meaning, and a more measured 'reading' where they voice and sometimes finger pointed in their efforts to match eye, ear and voice with what was on the page. This word-by-word reading however was not the same as the hesitant, uncertain, word-by-word reading witnessed in children who have found learning to read a difficult and demanding task from the beginning, and who, by concentrating their attention at the letter and word level, never do get to hear themselves read fluently. The voice and finger pointing type reading demonstrated by the children involved in this study, continued to maintain its syntactic coherence and the confidence of the children in reproducing written language in this form was still evident. Occasionally however, the rhythm would be broken by them pausing for some time as they tried to use more of the visual information on the page to unlock an unknown word.

As the children strove for a more accurate reproduction of their favourite stories the process of self-correction seemed to play an increasingly important role. Although their 'miscues' were almost always of high quality, the semantic agreement with the original text improved as their reading became more accurate, and of course the number of their 'miscues' decreased. On occasions, Gillian in particular, as has been seen already, would 'correct' the intonation patterns of the reader and as subsequent transcripts demonstrate, would self-correct in this aspect of her reading-like behaviour also.

Reference has already been made in Chapter VI of this report to the characteristics of the books that seemed to facilitate the rapid development of accurate reading-like behaviour in the children. Two books which were immediate favourites with the children were *Did You Ever See*? and *My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes*, and these were the only two books that Sean (3;4) for example, was able to 'read' with any degree of fluency. The following transcript resulted from his agreeing confidently to 'reading' *Did You Ever See*? for the investigator:

Text: Did you ever see a snail? - sail?
S: Did you ever see a snail? - sail?

Text: Did you ever see a sheep? - sleep?
S: Did you ever see a sheep? - -
(Turns over two pages so misses the word "sleep").

Text: Did you ever see a crow? - row?
S: Did you ever see What's this? (Points to the picture).
I: What do you think it is?
S: A parrot?
I: A crow.
S: Did you ever see a crow? - row?
(Sean continues 'reading' in this manner, asking questions from time to time such as "How come it's quacking?" (cracking) referring to the 'yak', and "What is it digging for?". referring to the 'pig').

Text: Did you ever see a fish? - wish?
S: Did you ever see a fish? - wish?

Text: Did you ever see a snake? - bake?
S: Did you ever see what?
I: What's that? (Pointing to the picture).
S: a snake? - bake?
I: Where's the word bake? (Sean pointed to the word immediately and then of his own violation, reread the text).

[illegible]: Did you ever see a snake? - bake?

Text: Did you ever see a book? - end?
S: (Voice pointing) Did-you-ever-see-
a-book? - end?
I: And where's the word end? (Points correctly).

At the conclusion of Sean's (3;4) 'reading' the investigator turned back to the "Did you ever see a goat float?" page and asked him to point to the words as he 'read' them. He voice pointed but was unable to match the words exactly with his finger although he did manage the first and last words correctly and did stay on the line of print, sliding his finger across the page in a left to right direction. At the conclusion of the 'reading' Sean immediately offered to 'read' the story again, and did so fluently and without error, or any questions.

This transcript indicates how relatively easy it is for a young child to engage successfully in reading-like behaviour, provided the text is predictable through its repetitive, rhyming language and picture supported qualities. Through his activity with this book, Sean demonstrated that he had mastered page matching directionality in his reading-like behaviour, he could 'read' using excellent intonation patterns, and perhaps most importantly had begun spontaneously to use voice pointing techniques along with fluent reading. He could find words on request, and although he was close to being made to match his eye, ear and voice with his finger, he still had not mastered the task exactly. He 'read' willingly and confidently and enjoyed the process so much that he wanted to repeat it immediately. At the age of three, Sean now had a book that he could independently 'read' (according to his definition of the word). He had access to a quantity of written language, which he could begin to inspect at his leisure, just as Gardner's (1970) early readers did.

From a transcript recorded earlier in this chapter it was seen that Jennifer (3;9) had mastered Did You Ever See so effectively that she had begun to use completion reading techniques with her brother Christopher (2;4) to help him learn to 'read' it. After she had finished her completion reading activity with her brother, the investigator turned to pages containing the text "Did you ever see a goat? float?" With the comment that "This says ..", he read the text to her using a normal style of reading. Jennifer immediately started to read the text, with the following result:

Text: Did you ever see a goat? float? ("float?" was on the following page).
J: Did you (Starts to read fluently and then rereads more deliberately, but not quite voice pointing) Did you ever see a goat? (Stops again and rereads once more, this time voice and finger pointing very deliberately).

Text: Did you ever see a goat? float
x x x x x (Finger pointing)
J: Did-you - e -ver- see - (Stopped 'reading' and pointing and tried again).

Text: Did you ever see a goat? float?
x x x x (Finger pointing)
J: Did-you- e - ver- (Stops again, this time demonstrating some frustration).

The investigator then asked her to read and point with him, but her syllabication of 'ever' was even more pronounced and she once again pointed to "see" for the second syllable of 'ever'. He then read it to her being careful not to syllabicate 'ever' asking her to point to the words as he read and she was able to match perfectly.

Despite the briefness of this interaction it provided some interesting insights into Jennifer's emergent reading behaviour. She spontaneously commenced to read the line of print fluently after the investigator had read it, checked herself and reread more slowly and carefully. She stopped before turning over the page to read the final word in the sentence and again reread the line. This time she tried to voice and finger point precisely but ran into matching problems due to her syllabicating the word 'ever'. By stopping before she reached the last word on the page with her finger pointing, she demonstrated that she was either attending to some visual information in the print which told her she was not matching correctly, or she had looked ahead as she was 'reading' and saw that she would run out of words to point at. She stopped again and took another rerun at the line, voice and finger pointing again, but she quickly realised that she was in trouble once more and stopped even sooner this time. When the line was read to her however, she was able to eye-ear-voice match perfectly.

We see here a 3 year 9 month old girl directing her own efforts to shift from a fluent reproduction of print, relying primarily on meaning, memory and probably the illustrations, to a girl endeavouring to give quite precise attention to the words on the page and match what she was saying with what she saw. In order to do that most effectively, she slowed her 'reading' down with each succeeding attempt, but because of her over-careful enunciation, she continued to run into difficulty, even though she persisted in her attempts. Once the precise enunciation problem was removed, her matching problem was resolved. In retrospect, it would have been far more revealing to have encouraged her to try and work it all out for herself, but it was felt that she was becoming frustrated and would have abandoned the task had not some help been given.

During the next visit to Jennifer's home she was observed 'reading' the same story to her mother and her brother, Christopher. The following edited transcript indicates that Jennifer (3;9) may have been attending to the visual information during at least some of her reading-like behaviour.

Text: Did you ever see a sheep? sleep?
J: Did you ever see a sheep? sleep?

Text: Did you ever see a crow? row?
J: Did you ever see a hawk?
M: No. That's not hawk.
J: Crow? talk? row? (When she self-corrected here, the investigator could see that she was looking at the word and not the picture).

Jennifer proceeded to 'read' fluently to the end of the story with Christopher participating intermittently. The investigator then asked the mother to return to the "crow-row" sequence, which Jennifer then reread and was asked how she had known that the word was "crow". The following dialogue took place between the mother and her:

J: I don't know
M: Did the picture tell you it was crow or did the word tell you?
J: That word.
M: Can you point to the word that told you it was crow? (Jennifer points to the word correctly).

In the first transcript we saw Jennifer engaging in self-correcting behaviour, initially with the assistance of the mother and then independently with "row" for "talk". In an attempt to check if his observation of her seeming to cue to the word in order to make this self-correction. she was taken back to the sequence and questioned. Although her mother's question was a leading one, it appeared that Jennifer may in fact have cued to the word to self correct. The rhyming nature of the language and the strongly supportive picture clues however, could have been source of her correcting her 'miscue'.

Transcripts recorded earlier in this report (p. 325) gave a clear indication of Jennifer's (3;10) ability to engage in self-correcting behaviour as she 'read' with finger and voice pointing, her book entitled, I Can Read. It was interesting to note however that although she could 'read' sections of The Three Bears and Madeline fluently, she never switched to a finger and voice pointing procedure when 'reading' these books in a cooperative manner. It seemed that matching strategies appeared only after the greater majority of the text was able to be retrieved with confidence and a reasonably high degree of accuracy.

Kaaren did not have very many books that she was able to retrieve fully and with any degree of confidence. She was able to independently 'read' with a high degree of accuracy, large parts of The Very Hungry Caterpillar, but the only part of that story she ever tried to eye-ear-voice match with as she 'read' was the last line consisting of "he was a beautiful butterfly." Even that caused her difficulty though, because she frequently reproduced the meaning and not the exact words of the line and was not able to match word-by-word as a result of that.

Kaaren (4;5) was observed 'reading' The Very Hungry

Caterpillar with father and Sean and the following is a transcript of what happened when they came to the last page.

Text: he was a beautiful butterfly.
F: Yeah! And then what did he do?
K: Turned into a butterfly (answering her father's question).
F: Boy!
K: he-was-a-love (Stops and self-corrects) beau-ti-ful but-ter-fly.
F: He was a beautiful butterfly wasn't he?
K: A beautiful - you point to a word. (The father reads and points and then goes through the process of having Kaaren point and read until she matches perfectly, although she initially pointed to "beautiful" when he asked her to find "butterfly").

It can be seen that Kaaren was able to self-correct "love(ly)" for "beautiful" and this may have resulted from her cueing to the visual information since she was voice pointing as she 'read'. When asked by the father to point to the word "butterfly" she pointed to "beautiful" initially, indicating that she was probably using initial letter cues to assist her.

Like Sean and Jennifer, Kaaren found Did You Ever See and My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes very easy to learn to 'read' and with both of these books she would switch from voice pointing to fluent reading as she came to particular lines. On one occasion she was 'reading' My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes with a high degree of accuracy and fluency but every time she came to the line "But my cat likes to hide in boxes" she changed to very deliberate and exact finger and voice pointing. At one stage she was asked where the word "Japan" was on the page and she pointed to it correctly and was similarly successful when asked to point to "The cat". She was then asked to "... point to that line and read it" (The cat from Japan) and she did so confidently and accurately. It was while she was 'reading' this particular story that she started to use the picture clues by turning back to each page in sequence as she reproduced the text. When she read the recurring line, "But my cat likes to hide in boxes" however, she was seen to look very carefully at the words as she finger and voice pointed.

Fluent 'reading' would change to 'reading' involving voice pointing (and sometimes finger pointing) with Kaaren, as with Sean and Jennifer, with material that was very familiar to her. In the following transcript she had just finished 'reading' Did You Ever See? making up her own rhyming words for the answer to each question (for example: Did you ever see a sheep? - peep? (instead of "sleep"); "giraffe" - "peraffe"; "crocodile" - "hocodile"). Kaaren (4;8) then came to the last two pages where the final word did not rhyme.

Text: Did you ever see a book? end.
K: ('Read' fluently) Did you ever - (Stops and 'rereads' with voice pointing). Did-you-ever- (a long pause) - you.
I: Did you finish that page?
K: What does this say? (Pointing to the words. Investigator does not respond).

K: Did-Did-you-ever-see (pause) a (pause)
book (Turns over the page) - end.

It is probable that she changed from her fluent 'reading' with nonsense rhyming because she had anticipated the non-rhyming ending of the last page. Her rather laboured voice pointing with its long pauses, seemed to indicate that she was trying to use the visual information since she was very familiar with the repetitive pattern of the language and could have used the picture clue to obtain the word "book". Left to use her own strategies she was able to successfully complete the reading.

Despite the fact that Kaaren did not have very many favourite stories that she could retrieve for herself through fluent reading-like behaviour, she was beginning to use some of these to 'read' more accurately. She would spontaneously move from fluent 'reading' to eye-ear-voice matching and in so doing would, on occasions, begin to self-correct 'miscues' and it would seem, use some visual information to do so. She was persistent and self-reliant when she was engaged in this process, but she also knew how to use the pictures when she had difficulty retrieving an extensive piece of the text. She seemed to be almost deliberately concentrating on small amounts of the text, which she knew very well, to "try out" her ability to use the visual information to 'read' her stories.

Gillian was able to retrieve a remarkable number of her stories for herself, and during each day, would spend a great amount of time 'reading' silently or orally to herself. She was so skillful at using the pictures and the non-visual information to 'read', that at one stage she had seemed almost reluctant to begin to try and make more systematic use of the visual information available in the form of the print. Her 'reproducing meaning' technique had worked so well for her and her growing awareness of what was involved in learning to read, had caused her to view the process as a too difficult and complicated a task for her. The following transcripts however provide just a small sample of the manner in which Gillian was vigorously involved in using her well developed reading-like behaviour to learn how to read, using both the non-visual and the visual information available to her.

The Three Little Kittens was a story that had been either read to Gillian or she had 'read' it, literally hundreds of times since she first showed a great interest in it when she was two years old. Despite this, whenever it was read during the period of the study, Gillian always displayed a great interest in it and would 'read' it to herself without any prompting, usually commenting on some aspect of the plot and its characters. When the following transcript was recorded Gillian (5;11) had offered to 'read' this book to the investigator.

Text	Gillian
Three little kittens,	Three little kittens,
They lost their mittens,	They lost their mittens,
And they began to cry,	And they began to cry,
"Oh, mother dear,	"Oh, mother (Stops here and 'rereads' using a high-pitched voice). "Oh, mother dear
we sadly fear	See here, see (long pause) here (obviously uncertain). See here, sss- (Says to herself: "Don't know that word"). ('Rereads') "Oh, mother dear, we sadly fear,
our mittens we have lost.	our mittens we h- have lost. (Repeats) our mittens we have lost."

Here we see Gillian reading fluently and accurately, the first three lines of her very familiar story, stopping and self-correcting her use of intonation before she ran into trouble with the words "we sadly fear". "See here, see here" was a line from later in the story and she often placed it in at this point. On this occasion she became aware that something was not right as she 'read' the line with her substitution. The fact that "we" and "see" and "fear" and "here" have certain graphic and phonic similarities may have cued her to using these words. She took a rerun at that part of the line, and was obviously trying to identify "sadly" from its initial letter ("sss"). Because she had disturbed the syntactic and semantic flow of the story with her initial 'miscues', and she did not have sufficient phonic skill at this stage to decode the word in isolation, she employed a technique she frequently used and took a rerun at the whole line. This time is all came together and she reread successfully. In the final line "have" caused her to hesitate, so to check herself out on it and reinforce her learning she reread the line again, this time without any hesitation.

Rerunning was a strategy that both Clay (1972) and Holdaway (1979) witnessed being used frequently by children who were learning to read in their homes and in school. The strategy appears when they are stopped in mid-sentence by a problem and before they make a correction they rerun from the beginning, in order as Holdaway (1979) suggests "to gain a clear refreshed feeling for the semantic and syntactic drive of the sentence" (p. 100). This technique was demonstrated again in her rerun to change her intonation pattern for the direct speech of "Oh mother dear" and the following transcript provides another example of Gillian's (5;11) use of this technique. The investigator was echo reading Button Soup with her.

I: "I'm looking for Scrooge Mac Duff", said Daisy.
G: "I'm looking for Scrooge Mac Duff", said Daisy.
I: "Scrooge Mac Duff!" cried Goofy the Sheriff.
G: "Scrooge Mac Duff!" cried Goofy the Sheriff.
I: Where did you read that? Where are those words?
G: ('Reads' pointing correctly with her finger) "Scrooge - Mac ('Rereads' to place more emphasis) Mac-Duff!" cried-Goofy-the- (I: Sheriff) Sheriff.

I: "But no one ever pays him a visit!"
G: "But no one ever pays him a visit!"
I: Where is that line?
G: (Pointing and starting to read as if she were reading indirect speech). But-no-No! (Rereads, changing the tone of her voice to direct speech) But-no-one ever (heavy emphasis) - pays him a visit."

Despite the fact that Gillian was using both voice and finger pointing when reading these lines she still managed to maintain an excellent level of expression and placed great emphasis on "ever", something that the investigator had not done in this reading. In both cases she took a rerun at what she was 'reading' to change her intonation pattern to a more expressive one, demonstrating that she was predicting what was coming next. She was able to match accurately with her finger and her voice and even went back with her finger when she reread.

By this stage of her reading development, Gillian (5;11) was beginning to demonstrate a far greater awareness of the presence and importance of the visual information available on the page and, in her efforts to reproduce what was there more accurately, was beginning to use this information more frequently as she tried to 'read' her stories. Biemiller (1970) as a result of observing first graders in the process of learning to read, noted an initial context dependent stage where the children tended to rely on their memory for the story and what they thought might be on the page, then an increased use of graphic information with a corresponding decreased use of context, and finally a reading strategy that integrated both graphic and contextual information. As children begin to attempt to use more of the graphic information and concentrate their attention on this they seem to forget, to a certain extent, that their already well developed feeling for the semantic and syntactic flow of the language would help them to solve their problems as they tried to read what was on the page.

The following two transcripts of Gillian's reading-like behaviour provide good examples of how she appeared to be entering this transition stage, brought about by her increased awareness of what was on the page and her growing need to be able to engage in accurate independent reading. The first transcript was recorded as Gillian (5;11) 'read' cooperatively with her father. The book was Whose Mouse Are You? and it had been read to her only once previously as it had been collected from the library on the same day. Gillian wanted to try and read it to her father and had managed to do so up to the point where this transcript starts, with occasional assistance:

Text: Find my sister and bring her home.
F: (Prompting) Find -
G: Find my sister and bring her home. (Reads deliberately but with good intonation).

Text: Wish for a brother as I have none.
G: (After a long pause) W -ish (stretches out the "w") - for-a-brother. (Voice points very deliberately).
F: as-
G: as-I-(long pause) I don't know.
F: have-
G: none.
F: none. Right!

Text: Now whose mouse are you?
G: Now whose mouse are you? ('Reads' deliberately but does not voice point).

Text: My mother's mouse. She loves me so.
G: My mother's which makes me so.
F: My mother's -
G: My-mother's-mouse- (long pause).
F: Do you know what that one is? (Points to the word "She") - She-
G: She-loves-me-so. (Very deliberately).

Text: My father's mouse from head to toe.
G: My father - (pause)
F: My father's (Places an emphasis on the final "s').
G: My father's mouse from head to toe ('Reads' deliberately).

Text: My sister's mouse. She loves me too.
G: My-sister's-mouse (Voice points very deliberately, but pauses after 'mouse').
F: Remember this one? (Gillian laughs in an embarrassed manner and says "No"). She-
G: She-loves-me-too. (Voice points very deliberately)

Text: My brother's mouse. Your brother's mouse?
G: My-brother's mouse (pause). What does this say? (Father does not respond so Gillian reruns). My-brother's-mouse. You-r (stretches this out and was close to saying "You are"). brother's mouse? (with a strong rising inflexion).

Text: My brother's mouse. He's brand new.
G: My brother's mouse. He's brand new!

Gillian was undoubtedly trying to use whatever visual information that she could during most of this 'reading'. Her very deliberate voice pointing behaviour, her long pause before "wish" and then her stretching out of the initial sound of that word, her stopping after she had read some words in a line with the comment "I don't know" (the next word) and her stretching out of "your" all indicated that she was trying to use visual information as she 'read'. She used the rerun technique successfully again when her father did not come forward with assistance and she made good use of intonation. In her most serious 'miscue' on the line "My mother's mouse. She loves me so" where she omitted "mother" and substituted "which makes" for "she loves", Gillian did not deliberately voice point. The fact that what she produced did not make sense would again indicate that she was concentrating on the visual information rather than aiming at reproducing meaning as it was only on very rare occasions that she would make a semantically unacceptable 'miscue' and leave it uncorrected when she was engaged in reading-like behaviour.

Throughout the reading, the father offered as little help as possible, even to the point of rereading "My father's" and emphasizing only the "s" to cue Gillian to what followed. Despite his ready assistance, his question of "Remember that one" caused Gillian some embarrassment and throughout the 'reading' she demonstrated this type of feeling when she had to wait for help. At the conclusion of her effort he praised her warmly with "You did that very well. You read that!". Although the story was strongly supported by pictures, since the text of it had been read to her only once previously it was apparent that Gillian was indeed trying to read, using both the visual and the non-visual information with considerable skill. Her attitude towards the task was extremely positive, and her concentration and effort intense. She appeared to be well satisfied with her performance and her father's warm praise was all that she needed. She immediately offered to read Where the Wild Things Are.

During the final observational visit to Gillian's home, she offered to read Where the Wild Things Are to the investigator and then she proceeded to do so with very little assistance. The following transcripts have been selected from that recording, and it has been reported using normal miscue procedures, except that her voice pointing has been indicated by dashes between words and dialogue and comments have been included.

(SC) when
1. The night ^ Max wore his wool suit

making a
2. and made mischief of one kind and another,

the
3. His mother called him ^ wild thing

I'm going to
4. and Max said, "I'll eat you up". (Read extremely quickly and with great expression).

(SC) Max went went
5. So ^ he was sent to bed without eating anything.

(SC) (SC) jungle
6. That very night, in-Max's-room-a-forest-grew (Gillian was asked at this point, how she knew the word was not "jungle" and she pointed to the first letter in "forest" and said "fuh").

7. And-grew

the were
8. grew until his ceiling ^ hung with vines

9. And the walls $\overset{\text{were}}{\text{became}}$ $\overset{\text{their}}{\text{the}}$ world all around $\overset{\text{him}}{\wedge}$.

10. And-an-ocean- (Asks "What does this say?" pointing

11. to "tumbled", and was told) - tumbled-by-with-a-

(Asks "What does this say?" pointing to "private"

but goes on before being given the word)

12. private-boat-for-Max.

13. And-he-sailed-off- (Asks and was prompted) through-

14. (Asks and was prompted) night-and-day.

And later:

15. "Now-stop"-Max-said,- $\overset{\text{SC}}{\text{and}}$ $\overset{\text{he}}{\wedge}$ sent $\overset{\text{SC}}{\text{the}}$ $\overset{\text{them}}{\wedge}$ (Asks "What does this say? pointing to "wild" but goes on before she could be prompted)

16. wild-things-off-to-bed-without $\overset{\text{anything to eat}}{\wedge}$ eating their supper.

When asked how she knew that the word was "wild" without being told, she replied "I just remembered "things" and that goes with that, pointing to "wild."

These transcripts displayed a wide range of extremely important reading and learning to read strategies being used by this young girl. These were an outcome of Gillian's extensive experience with interesting and meaningful written language which started when her first nursery rhymes were read to her when she was 4 months old. For years the psycholinguists have been stressing a view of reading that places an emphasis on meaning. It is, they claim, meaning that directs and facilitates the processes involved in perceiving what is on the page. By concentrating on making sense of what they are reading, by using their knowledge of what would sound like syntactically acceptable language, the reader's dependence on the visual information on the page is greatly reduced and their processing is able to be much more rapid and economical. In expressing his opposition to those who view reading primarily as precise visual process involving the recognition of words through associating symbols with appropriate sounds, Kenneth Goodman (1976b) writes:

> In place of this misconception, I offer this: Reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses. (p. 498)

A careful examination of Gillian's strategies for 'reading' Where the Wild Things Are, reveals that she was operating at the "selective process" level of reading to a great extent.

It must be remembered that Gillian was just beginning to use her phonic knowledge to confirm her predictions as to what was on the page and at this stage of her development, she appeared to be using only initial letter cues. (For example her self-correction of "jungle" for "forest" was made because of the "fuh" in "forest"). Her mother had reported that she seemed to be able to identify most beginning 'sounds' of words but was not yet able to discriminate between two different words which started with the same letter. Although she had experienced some phonics instruction in kindergarten, she had still not been directed to concentrate on this source of information in reading. Virtually all the knowledge about reading she had developed had been the result of her own self-directed learning, through her experience with written language. In fact, all the strategies she used while engaged in the process of 'reading' had been self-generated. Gillian's self-initiated learning provides a good example of Smith's (1978) observation that:

> We begin learning to read the first time we make sense of print, and we learn something about reading every time we read. (p. 128)

She had been making sense of print over a long period of time and her extensive experience with it had provided her with the opportunity to learn a great deal about reading and learning to read.

Throughout her reading of Where the Wild Things Are, Gillian moved from fluent reading to a rather deliberate voice pointing procedure where she was obviously paying a great deal more attention to the print. This latter fact was confirmed when the locations of her self-corrections of her 'miscues' and where she had asked for assistance with particular words, were examined. Her six successful self-corrections occurred while she was voice pointing and the one that was partially successful (line 5) was made when she was reading fluently. From a total of 17 uncorrected 'miscues' only six occurred when she was voice pointing. Finally, it was when she was 'reading' slowly and deliberately that Gillian would point to a word and ask "What does that say?" indicating by this behaviour that she knew exactly where she was on the line of print and what words she did not know.

Gillian's spontaneous movement to and from fluent 'reading' that was much more deliberate and graphophonically dependent, was a highly significant aspect of this young girl's drive towards literacy. When 'reading' fluently, Gillian made more 'miscues', but all of these made sense and were syntactically acceptable (for example the 'miscues' in lines 2,3,4 and 5). When matching eye, ear and voice she made far fewer 'miscues', but three of these were neither syntactically or semantically acceptable. (For example, one of the 'miscues' in each of lines 8 and 9). It would seem that concentrating more on the visual information, had caused Gillian to pay less attention to the syntax and the meaning of what she was 'reading'.

When 'reading' fluently, Gillian simply reconstructed the meaning of the story when she came to a word she could not recognize immediately, and continued with her 'reading'. When eye-ear-voice matching however, she would frequently ask for the unknown word without attempting to employ the non-visual strategies she could use so competently. On three separate occasions she asked for a word, but before the investigator could give it to her she had worked it out for herself, demonstrating in one instance in particular ("wild things") in line 16, that she could use the surrounding contextual information.

From this examination of the fluent and less fluent aspects of Gillian's reading-like behaviour, it would appear that just as Biemiller (1970), Bissex (1979, p. 180) and Clay (1972, pp. 161-3) observed, children move from a global use of context (non-visual information) in retrieving their stories, to concentrating on the graphophonic or visual information on the page. In the process of doing this they neglect to employ the non-visual information they had used so skillfully previously. But by spontaneously and frequently moving to and from fluent and non-fluent reading Gillian was providing herself with the opportunity to learn at the intuitive level at least, the extremely important, "selective" principle that Goodman (1976b) referred to. She was giving herself the chance of establishing the understanding that the easiest way to read, was to combine the use of the non-visual and visual information systems available to her, and to use each of these as much or as little as she needed to, in order to retrieve her stories for herself. She was doing in fact what Smith (1975) believes children should do in order to learn to read:

> A child can only learn to read by reading. Only by reading can a child test his hypothesis about the nature of the reading process, establish distinctive feature sets for words, learn to identify words and meanings with a minimum of visual information and discover how not to overload the brain's information-processing capacity and to avoid bottlenecks of memory. (p. 185)

One of the most significant behaviours displayed by children who make rapid progress in learning to read is the process of self-correction. Clay (1972) for example, found the children's rate of self-correction was "more closely related to reading progress scores than either intelligence or reading readiness scores" (p. 120). Self-correction is a clear indication that children are monitoring their own performance when they are reading. Clay discovered for example, that high progress readers corrected 1 in every 3 or 4 miscues that they made, whereas low progress readers' ratio was approximately 1 in 20. When readers self-correct their own miscues, it provides evidence that their delicate feedback mechanisms are working, telling them that what they are reading is or is not making sense and sounding like language. The most efficient readers, according to Goodman (1979, p. 70) are those who correct only those miscues that do not maintain the semantic and syntactic flow of the material they are reading.

Gillian's self-correction rate was approximately the same as that which Clay found in her high progress readers. Only one of her 'miscues' that she corrected ("them" for "the" in line 13) needed to be altered in the syntactic and semantic sense. It is probable that since she was engaged in a process of learning to confirm what she was saying with what she was seeing, that whenever a mismatch occurred, which she actually saw, she felt compelled to correct it. It was significant in this respect that all but one of her self-corrections were made when she was 'reading' in a voice pointing manner.

Through this process of confirming what she was saying with what she was seeing, Gillian was providing herself with firm basis from which to extend her knowledge of the sound-to-letter and letter-to-sound relationships of written language. Children find it much easier to go from the sound-to-letter details in words than the reverse of this process (Clay, 1977, p. 13). Smith (1979) for example makes the point in discussing the 'fallacy of phonics' that "phonics works if you know what a word is likely to be in the first place" (p. 56). Gillian was making phonics work for her by constantly confirming her predictions of what was on the printed page through her sound-to-letter associations. As Holdaway (1979) suggests:

> Sound-to-letter confirmations teaches [his emphasis] the range of acceptable alternatives without confusion. It teaches because it provides immediate reinforcement. (p. 94)

She was obtaining this immediate reinforcement through using both her non-visual and visual information systems coupled with her voice pointing strategy to retrieve a great deal of her story with a high degree of accuracy.

The movement from a type of reading-like behaviour which had as its purpose, the reproduction of the meaning of a story, to a type that sought not only to reproduce meaning, but also to maintain an increasingly high level of verbal similarity with the original text, could be seen in all the children involved in this study. Its beginnings were evident in Sean, Jennifer and Kaaren when they spontaneously switched to 'reading' their most familiar parts of their stories using the more deliberate voice pointing techniques which enabled them to begin to match what they were saying with what they were seeing. Its more comprehensive use could be seen in the manner in which Gillian 'read' whole stories, switching in and out of fluent reading and voice pointing as she felt inclined.

The reason for the appearance of this movement towards retrieving their stories more accurately, seemed to lie in the children's growing awareness that what they were saying as they 'read' their stories, did not always match what they were hearing from their parents. Also they were, and especially in the case of Gillian, becoming increasingly aware of the presence of their stories on the printed pages of their books, and the need for what they were 'reading' to agree with that as much as possible. The simplest way for them to start doing this was to take one of their best known stories, or a part of that, and read it at a rate at which they were able to perform the necessary matching, without losing the semantic and syntactic coherence of their story. Although the process of attempting to match their eyes, their ears and their voices with what was on the page in the line of print, created some problems, this did not seem to deter them greatly from trying.

The value, in a learning to read sense, of having access to a large numer of stories which could be retrieved at will through reading-like behaviour, could be most clearly seen in the case of Gillian. She was able to move freely from fluent 'reading' where she was able to concentrate on reproducing the meaning of the story through her non-visual information resources, to the more deliberate voice pointing 'reading' where she was beginning to combine the use of the visual and the non-visual sources of information to reproduce the story with greater accuracy. By maintaining the syntactic and semantic flow of the story she was constantly confirming her predictions as to what was coming next in the print by checking from her growing repertoire of sound-to-letter correspondences. Where there was some disagreement between what she was saying and what she was seeing, she could engage in the process of self-correction. She could employ the strategy of rerunning to regain her sense of semantic and syntactic coherence or she could utilize whatever visual information that seemed relevant to her, to assist her to 'read' more accurately. She had even developed the ability to scan ahead of a problem word in a search for helpful cues.

By incorporating a variety of strategies into her reading-like behaviour and by switching to and from fluent 'reading' and the more deliberate voice pointing procedure, Gillian was beginning to develop her ability to use the visual and non-visual sources of information available to her, as much or as little as needed, in order to retrieve what was on the page with as great an accuracy as was required. By monitoring her own performance constantly and employing self-corrective techniques where she deemed it necessary, she was contributing to the growth of the feedback mechanisms so essential if further self-directed learning was to take place.

Attitude Development and Learning to Read

The major problem in presenting data that demonstrate the attitude which the children involved in this study possessed in relation to books and reading, highlights one of the crucial differences between oral and written language. By observing these children involved in book experience situations and by listening to tape recordings of their interactions with their parents as they were read to, it was not difficult for the investigator to develop a clear understanding of the quality of these children's attitude towards books and reading. But it has not been possible to provide access to these understandings through the transcripts derived from audio-tape recordings made of the children's shared book experience, because of the limitations of written language to convey the impact of intonation, juncture, facial expression, and involvement present in the children's reading-like behaviour. One transcript will be presented (pp. 502-3) however, in an attempt to convey some of these understandings. This section then, contains descriptions of some of the results of the observations and interactions made during the course of this study that appear to provide useful examples of their growing interest in and attitudes towards books and reading.

In Chapter V, in the section on "Attitudes Towards Reading and Books," the comment was made that the single most impressive factor arising from the observations of these children's activity with books, was the quality of their interest in and attitude towards books and reading. Apart from the reports of the parents, all of whom indicated a high level of interest on the part of their children, their were several features of their behaviour with books which clearly demonstrated this. All the children for example, seemed to have almost inexhaustible attention spans when listening to and participating in stories being read to them. The amount of time they spent independently with their books, magazines and story records has already been commented on, and they would also 'read' to and with their friends and their brothers or sisters as a part of their normal play activity. Jennifer's parents reported that it was not unusual for her to wake up through the night and ask for a story to be read to her, and reference has already been made of Gillian's habit of spending half an hour with her books before breakfast each morning. The amount of time in itself, that these children (and especially Jennifer and Gillian), spent in book related activities each day gave a clear indication of their intense interest in books and reading.

But there were other less noticeable, but no less important features of their behaviour with books which indicated their level of interest in them. The high quality of the intonation and phrasing patterns used by the children when 'reading' their stories has been referred to consistently. Jennifer in her character role playing during her 'reading' of The Three Bears gave clear evidence of that with her "wee", "middle-sized" and "big" voices, and Gillian would frequently correct and improve the intonation pattern used by the person reading to and with her. When echo reading Button Soup with the investigator for example, she constantly used superior patterns of intonation to those being used by him, to the point where he remarked that "Oh, I can't read like that!". to her considerable amusement of course.

Although the children seemed automatically to use sophisticated, adult levels of intonation and phrasing during their reading-like behaviour, particularly when 'reading' any direct speech in their stories, their use of this intonation did not appear to be based on an imitation of the adult model. Clear evidence of this was obtained with Gillian's (5;11) 'reading' of parts of Where the Wild Things Are with her father. The story had been read to her only twice previously, both times by the investigator, and then readings had been taped. When a comparison was made of the intonation patterns used by the investigator on certain expressive sections of the story, with those used by Gillian 'reading' these same sections, it was found that they were not the same. The nuances, the use of rising and falling inflection and the pauses were quite different and in most cases Gillian's were superior to those used by the investigator. She was using her own imaginative interpretations of the characters and the development of the story, and doing it with a degree of skill and creativity which was surprising in one so young.

The exceptionally high level of competence demonstrated by these children in expressing their involvement in, and understanding of, their stories appeared to be derived from two main sources. In the first instance, they had the ongoing experience of listening to their parents, most of whom read expressively. This provided them with a model to emulate rather than one to imitate. By regularly listening to a vaste range of stories containing a great variety of written language patterns being read by people who made good use of their voices to convey the atmosphere of the stories these children were provided with good examples of "how to read".

The second source of their competence to express their involvement in an understanding of their stories seemed to originate within the children themselves.

In the early stages of the development of reading-like behaviour, there was a tendency for the quality of this behaviour to be imitative rather than emulative. As they listened to the same stories being read differently by different people, and their experience with an ever-increasing range of stories grew, their flexibility and individuality began to find expression through their own interpretations of the meaning being conveyed in their stories. They began to 'read', according to how they felt about the story in terms of their emotional involvement in its development. And it was this growth of their ability to use their imaginations so effectively that provided the most powerful source of, not only their interest in and attitudes towards books and reading, but also their ability and desire to 'read' their stories in such a way that their complete involvement in them was fully expressed to their satisfaction. The pleasure that they derived from the process was clearly evident in their faces as they engaged in it.

Learning how to use their imaginations was a direct outcome of these children's experience and involvement with books being read to them over an extensive period of time.

Like many other facets of human behaviour, the potential to learn to use their imaginations exists, but unless the necessary and varied experiences with that behaviour are provided, its possibilities for growth all lie dormant and undeveloped. Within the secure setting of their parent's arms these children were being provided constantly with the opportunity to explore the dimensions and inner world of fear and suspense, joy and pathos, conflict and resolution. How one of the parents did this can be seen in the following transcription. Gillian's father was reading a Disney Club book Disney World, which had pop-up features, to her and her brother. The three of them were sitting close together on the couch and Gillian was manipulating the moving features of the book. It was during the reading of this book that Gregory had tried to prevent Gillian from participating on seven different occasions, but as it can be seen, the father still managed to involve both the children in the reading to a very high degree.

> F: Look at this! (Pointing to the pop-up feature of a python) What's this?
> G and Gr: A python! (With fear in their voices).
> F: (Whistles in wonderment and in a suspenseful way). Do you know what this is? (Pointing to the pop-up feature of a hippopotamus)
> Gr: A charging hippo!
> G: A hippo!
> F: (Reading) ... and charging hippos! Where's the hippo? (With fear in his voice. Gillian points to it). Yeah! There he is! (In an ominous measured tone, but then he speeds up his delivery and raises his voice in excitement). Watch out for that python hanging from the branches! (Whistles in wonderment) Boy! He'd give you quite a hug wouldn't he?

G: Yeah! (Made a further indecipherable comment, but the tone of her voice indicated that she was rather fearful).
F: Sque-e-e-ze the dickens out of you!
Gr: Is he real or just a toy one?
F: I think they're just toy ones. We'll have to see when we go down. (They planned to visit Disney World in the near future).

Later in the story, as he turned over a page, Gillian made a ghost pop-up suddenly which brought the desired response from the father.

F: Aaagghh!!! What's that?
G and Gr: A ghost peeking up! (in great excitement).
F: Yuk!

These transcripts give some indication of the expressive manner in which the father used his voice and other expressions to involve the children in the reading. No transcript, however, can ever hope to reproduce the way in which the human voice may be used to convey meaning and feeling, to create excitement and tension and to bring to the listeners the reality of the experience being read about. Like the parents of the other children, this father was supplying something for his children that only books could provide.

The values to be derived from reading or being read to, have been commented on by Huck (1979). She writes:

> Literature opens windows for children that they never knew existed; it helps them to entertain new ideas, to see the world from a new perspective, and to develop their imaginations.
> ... Good writing may transport the reader to other places and other periods of time, and expand his

> life space. Identification with others is experienced as the reader enters an imaginary situation with his emotions tuned to those of the story.
> ... Reading (and being read to) gets us out of our time and place, out of ourselves, but in the end it will return us to ourselves, a little different, a little changed by this experience." (p. 702)

The drive towards becoming literate can and should be directed and sustained by the interest and the attitude of the children involved in the process. It was evident in the behaviour of these children that the development of their imaginations, through the experience of being read to from very early in their lives, contributed in highly significant ways to the growth and to the sustaining of this interest and attitude. As Carter and McGinnis (1970) observe, the "... interests, attitudes and points of view of the individual have their origin in the environment" (p. 61).

Reference has already been made in various parts of this report to studies that have demonstrated the positive effects on reading development of children being read to regularly by their parents, (Bullock, 1975; Cebuliak, 1977; Clark, 1976; Clay, 1972; Durkin, 1966; Gardiner, 1970; Gallup International, 1969b, Holdaway, 1976b, 1979; Huey, 1980; Sutton, 1969). The Bullock Report (1975) for example, pleaded with parents to read to their children over and over again, stories that they like to hear. Huey (1908) saw the secret of learning to read 'naturally' in "parents reading aloud to and with the child" (p. 332). But all the studies examined, except that of Holdaway's (1976b, 1979) have investigated the effects of early book experience, after the event; that is, they have identified high progress readers and looked for the factors in their experience that seemed to have lead to their learning to read easily. Not surprisingly, the studies determined that these children normally came from book oriented homes and that they demonstrated a high degree of interest in books and reading. Only Holdaway (1976b, 1979) appears to have examined the origins and the development of this interest and the specifics of its effects on the progress of young children becoming literate. He reached similar conclusions, as a result of his observations, to those reported in this section.

Early and extensive experience with books in the bedtime story situation contributes in highly significant ways to the development of children's emergent reading behaviours. The data and discussion presented in this section of this chapter has demonstrated how fundamental that contribution was in the growth of these children's interest in and attitude towards books and reading and how closely interrelated these factors were in the expansion of the inner world of their imaginations. All of these elements provided the foundation for their growing drive towards becoming literate because of the positive and powerful expectations they were developing for books. This drive supplied them with the incentive to gain access to their books for themselves and it was seen gaining its expression through the varied forms of their reading-like behaviour.

Summary

It can be seen from the data presented in this chapter that the practice of the parents reading to their children was the starting point for the development of their emergent reading behaviours. By reading and rereading favourite stories and by constantly introducing them to the realms of adventure, excitement, fun and fantasy through new stories, the parents were providing for the growing interest of their children in books and were stimulating the development of the inner world of their imaginations. The warm human sharing that accompanied the use of books, the involvement and pleasure they experienced through hearing the language of books read, gradually resulted in books in themselves coming to be seen as objects of delight and enjoyment. The extremely powerful and positive expectations that were developing for books and reading formed the foundation for the growth of an inner drive in the children to begin to want to gain access to this experience independently. This in turn led to the spontaneous appearance of reading-like behaviour in its various forms.

But the story-time, shared book experience was serving other important functions which would play a major role in the children's growing need and desire to retrieve their favourite stories for themselves, and ultimately in their ability to read in the real sense of the word. Through being read to from a great variety of stories these children were gaining valuable experience with the way in which stories were constructed in terms of plot, theme, character development, eposodic structure, and resolution. As a result of this they were able to begin to build schemata for the various kinds of stories that were being read to them. As they listened to a story, they were, as Guthrie (1977) suggested, able to "perceive it in terms of its structure and remember it accordingly" (p. 576). From the results of their growing ability to do this, they appeared to have little difficulty in reproducing the basic meaning of their stories through a process of reconstructing them, using much of their own language to do so.

The patterns of language that they used to reproduce their stories however, revealed that they had not only internalized and intuitively developed their control over the structures of their stories, but that they had succeeded in building into their repertoire of language skills, the ability to retrieve their favourite stories using the more complex patterns of written language. The children's ability to reconstruct their stories using these more complex forms was clearly seen in many of the transcripts presented throughout this report. An examination of these revealed that, far from being a surface level imitative task of rotely memorizing the verbal sequences of their stories, these children were engaged in the deep level processing of the meanings of their stories. As they did this they were frequently applying a series of complex transformations to what they were hearing, and reproducing their stories in their own form of written language. In her comments concerning the values of children being read to from an early age, Clarke (1976) makes the point that by sensitizing them to the structures of written language, parents and teachers are providing them with the basis from which "to make appropriate anticipations" (p. 31) when reading themselves, thereby laying the foundations for their future development as fluent readers.

Learning to "talk like a book" however, required more than learning to deal with the patterns of written language. It meant learning to deal with the complex, abstract constructions of metaphor and analogy and the various unusual idiomatic forms of the English language. It meant creating language as a result of experiencing meaning that had been represented by only language (with a few accompanying pictures) and not from some direct experience or situation that they were involved in at the time. Producing language as a result of largely indirect and non-situational circumstances is a vastly different and more difficult task than creating language as an outcome of some intensely relevant and directly meaningful experience in their lives.

6

These children, were "learning how to mean" (Halliday, 1975) through a vaste range of vicarious experiences that they could obtain in no other way and their growth and development would be significantly enhanced from that opportunity.

In reading regularly to their children and giving them access to a variety of books and other activities involving the use of written language, the parents involved in this study held no preconceived notions concerning the use of these experiences to teach their children to read. Just as in oral language learning experiences, participation in the book experience situations was invited but not demanded. And just as in their oral language learning, the children involved themselves in written language learning as they were able. They selected the opportunities to participate based on their perception of their ability to do so and on their degree of involvement in the activity. Unfortunately their intrinsically motivated participation in written language learning experiences was subject to far more controls than were their opportunities to engage in oral language learning.

Although all the children did not use the same techniques in order to share in the reading of their favourite stories, possibly because of the different influences being exerted in each family, the end result was similar. They all began to demonstrate their ability to use reading-like behaviour in order to gain independent access to their books.

The techniques of mumble reading and completion reading were seen to operate interactively. As the children read along, either covertly or overtly, with one of their favourite stories, they were constantly anticipating what the reader was going to say, sometimes even ahead of when it was said. The basis of their predictions, of course, originated in their degree of familiarity with the story, in their experience with the patterns of written language and in their access to the appropriate schema for the story. The reader only had to leave a key word out or stop before the end of a sentence, particularly one that rhymed and/or was repetitive, and the young participant was usually ready to close the gap immediately. The compulsion felt to complete some incomplete structure is a powerful urge which the Gestalt psychologists have shown to exist in human behaviour, and its presence was already evident in the attempts of the young children to share in the reading of their favourite stories. Through their anticipatory mumble reading and their gap-filling, completion reading where they were able to obtain immediate confirmation of their predictions, they were employing the typical hypothesis/test strategy in their reading-like behavior, which Smith (1975) sees as so important in learning to read.

But completion and mumble reading did not provide these children with enough control over the learning situation, nor did it always give them sufficiently large chunks of language to deal with. The techniques of echo reading and cooperative reading provided them with these opportunities. By using these methods they could read as much or as little as they wished, still receiving assistance, confirmation and approval for their participatory activities from their parents. By sharing their 'reading' in this manner, they were able to move from their initial strategy of reconstructing their stories in their own language, where they concentrated on reproducing meaning, to retrieving them maintaining both this quality and a high degree of verbal similarity.

As they achieved semantic and verbal completeness and confidence in retrieving all or part of a favourite story, it was seen that the children's reading-like behaviour began to display another very important characteristic. From a fluent reproduction of the story, which exhibited the sophisticated use of highly appropriate intonation and phrasing patterns and the skillful substitution of unfamiliar parts with their own language, we saw the children switching, on occasions, to a much more measured reading-like behaviour, where they began to try and match eye, ear and voice with the print on the page.

In moving from what Biemiller (1970) describes as "context dependent" reading-like behaviour, to a procedure where they began to take more notice of the graphic information available on the page, the children provided themselves with the opportunity to learn a great deal more about the process of reading. They were able to begin to further develop and experiment with a range of reading strategies which would allow them to move into real reading ultimately with ease, proficiency and confidence resulting from years of both simulated and realistic practice. The demands of the more precise procedure of reading-like behaviour involving voice and finger pointing provided them with the chance to learn a range of skills and understandings about the process of reading that had been previously inaccessible to them through their fluent reading-like behaviour. When they engaged in fluent 'reading' they were striving to reproduce the meaning of their stories in language that only approximated the original and in the process, had been matching at the page level rather than at the word level.

Reading-like behaviour which involved matching eye, ear and voice provided these children with the opportunity to gain a sophisticated level of control over the eye movements necessary for skilled reading. The process allowed them to gain mastery of the precise directional and word-space-word matching skills so essential to early reading development. And finally, it enabled them to begin the complex task of learning to match sounds-to-letters, to identify significant features of words and parts of words, and to eventually develop a repertoire of letter-to-sound correspondences, all of which would be essential as part of the range of strategies they would need to read independently.

Apart from contributing to the children's growing awareness of the conventions of print, eye-ear-voice matching provided the stimulus for the development of other important reading strategies and the presence of these were most clearly seen in the case of Gillian. In her efforts to retrieve her stories using both non-visual and visual sources of information, we saw this little girl using the visual information available in the print to constantly confirm her 'non-visual' predictions as to what was on the page, through her knowledge of sound-to-letter correspondences. She also used the techniques of the re-run and the run-on when problems were met in the middle of sentences. Most importantly however, we saw clear evidence of Gillian monitoring her own performance and developing her own feedback system by the manner in which she engaged in self-correcting behaviour. Whereas most of her self-corrections had been based on what made sense and sounded like language, she was now beginning to use the visual information as well as to reproduce more accurately, what was on the page. She constantly demonstrated her awareness of where she was on a page by asking for specific words which were causing her difficulty.

Throughout her 'reading' of her favourite stories, Gillian would switch from voice pointing to fluent reading and in so doing may well have been learning to use the visual and non-visual sources of information as much or as little as was needed in order to successfully retrieve her story. This "selectivity" process also seemed to be operating in her application of the other strategies she was in the process of developing.

The examination of these children's independent and shared reading-like behaviour has revealed how significant a role it played in the development of their emergent reading behaviours. Its self-directed, self-selective and self-correcting nature, coupled with the children's constant experimenting and approximating in its production, gave clear indications of its similarity to the processes involved in learning oral language. In its movement from the globally fluent reproduction of the meaning of a story to the more finely controlled procedure of retrieving a story by skillfully using both the visual and non-visual sources of information, it was again possible to see the influence of Werner's (1957) orthogenetic principle operating.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The purpose of the study was to explore what happened during the typical bedtime story and other shared book experiences in the home, that contributed to the emergent reading behaviour in preschool children. The focus was on both parent and child behaviour, with particular attention to the role of reading-like behaviour played in developing the children's concepts about books, print and reading and in their learning to read.

Since the study was limited to a small number of children only theoretical generalizations were supported by the analysis. The conclusions which were supported are organized around the four major research questions which guided the study.

Conclusions

Research Question 1

> What are the characteristics of the parents' and their children's behaviours in shared book experience situations and how do these behaviours relate to the reading development of the children?

The Provision of Shared Book Experience

Examination of the interview data, the field notes and the transcripts of audiotaped observations revealed that the provisions made by parents for shared book experiences affected the children's reading development in a variety of ways. The age when the children were first read to, the frequency and duration of the reading experiences, the range and availability of books, magazines and story records, the storage and accessibility of the materials and the control of the story selection were features of the home reading environment which influenced the children's reading development.

Beginning the Children's Reading Experience.

The children in this study were read to from quite early in their lives. Yet, none of the parents saw these home reading experiences as contributing in specific ways to their children's reading development. Instead, they saw them as a means for stimulating interest and preparing the children for learning to read in school. This long term and rather generalized view of the values of reading to their children was held despite the fact that all the children were observed by the investigator to be making significant progress in learning to read. Gillian, for example, was close to reading independently by the end of the observations.

It can be concluded that while the parents read to their children from an early age, the parents were not generally aware of the specific contributions made by the experience to the learning to read process. This conclusion is supported by the observations of Durkin (1966).

The Frequency and Duration of Shared Book Experiences. The frequency and duration of shared book experiences varied across the families. Where the parents were avid readers themselves, with a history of pleasurable childhood experiences of being read to, then the bedtime story reading was usually lengthy and flexible in duration. These parents gave a clear indication of enjoying the process of reading to their children. When both parents worked outside the home and were not avid readers, the bedtime story reading was of shorter duration and its length was much more controlled. These parents enjoyed the experience of reading to their children but they read more out of a sense of duty than one of pleasure.

The frequency and duration of impromptu reading experiences were related in part to a ready supply of children's books being available in the family living area. Where books were left in this area then impromptu reading to the children occurred quite frequently. Where books were stored away from this area, then impromptu reading occurred only rarely.

It may be concluded that a number of factors affected the frequency and duration of the bedtime story and impromptu book experiences the children had in the home. These included the interest of the parents in reading, the amount of time they had available, and the constraints of the presence or absence of reading materials in the family living room.

The Provision of Reading Materials in the Homes. The book environment could be described as being adequate in the case of Kaaren and Sean and excellent in the case of Jennifer and Gillian. All the homes had libraries of children's books, received a copy of a children's magazine on a regular basis, and had a supply of long playing story records, some with accompanying books.

The children's home libraries grew from gifts of books and from the incidental purchases made by their parents. Gillian's parents had subscribed to a book club for their children for a period of four years. Only one parent used a reputable book shop as a regular source of books and she was the only one to consider authorship. Parents' selection of books to purchase appeared to be based on experience and intuition, rather than any clearly defined set of criteria, except for the quality of a book's illustrations and the balance of these with the amount of text in the story. There appeared to be no conscious examination of the language, characterization, plot and theme in the parents' decision to purchase any particular book. It must be noted here that when the children were permitted to select the stories to be read, they seldom selected one of poor quality. Indeed, their most frequent selections often could be classified as a "predictable book" (Rhodes, 1981), and they regularly chose books written by recognized authors, because those were the stories they enjoyed.

The personal ownership of books was seen to be extremely important to the children, but shared ownership tended to be stressed by the parents. However, even though shared ownership was stressed in two of the families, it was found that each child knew exactly which book he or she had received as personal gifts.

The regular arrival of the children's magazines was awaited eagerly by all the children and they spent a considerable amount of time with them. The games, puzzles and other activities provided them with valuable functional experience with written language.

In two homes, library books provided a regular supply of new reading material and proved valuable in extending the children's experiences and of making them aware of the library as a source of books. The borrowing period meant the books had to be read quickly and limited the re-reading experience. It was clear, however, that the children enjoyed them and requested that they be read immediately.

While long playing story records provided the children with independent access to stories, independent use of the record player was a limiting factor. Only Gillian was permitted to operate the family record player on her own and only she made regular use of this source of stories.

It can be concluded that, by providing their children with a growing home library of books, children's magazines, story records and library books, the parents were establishing a book-oriented environment which was enabling books and reading to become a normal, expected and sought after, every day experience for their children. Despite this however, the parents did not fully recognize the importance to the children of the personal ownership of books and despite their above average level of education, few of the parents were seen to use commonly accepted criteria or sources for the selection of books for their children's home libraries. When allowed to select favourite books for rereading however, the children usually chose those which had good quality illustrations and language that was memorable and predictable.

The Conditions for the Shared Book Experience

The conditions under which the parents conducted the shared book experience with their children were observed to play a role in the children's reading development. The decision as to whether the parents or the children chose the books to read and whether a child was read to individually or in the company of a sibling were seen to be two factors which exerted an important influence on the nature of the experience. The actual physical arrangement of the children, the parent, and the book being read was also seen to play a significant, but less obvious role, in the children's reading development.

Book Selection. In Gillian's and Jennifer's homes the parents usually left the selection of the stories to be read in the hands of the children. In Kaaren's and Sean's home, when the mother read to the children at the beginning of the study she chose the books to be read herself, but as the study progressed she altered this policy to one of permitting the children to select a book each to be read, along with her selection. The father of these two children however, allowed the children to select the books to be read, although he read to them infrequently.

When any of the parents selected stories to be read to the children they would usually select either a new title, or one that they had previously read infrequently. They would seldom select a story which they had read on many previous occasions. By reading stories to the children which were relatively unfamiliar to them they were seen to reduce the possibility of the children participating in the reading, particularly through reading-like behaviour, but they were adding to the children's range of experiences with books.

One of the most significant features of the children's behaviour with their books was observed to be their constant demands to be read a favourite story over and over again. When given the opportunity, they seemed to follow a policy of selecting a book to be read repeatedly, until they could reproduce it themselves through reading-like behaviour. That in turn gave them independent access to the story, once they could "read" it for themselves. This spontaneous demand for repetition was seen by Cazden (1972) in children learning oral language and was also observed by Church (1966) in the way the three children he was studying would insist on the same stories being read repeatedly.

Reading-like behaviour was observed developing in all children involved in this study just as it was seen developing in those children being studied by Ackerman (1977), Church (1966), Clay (1972), Holdaway (1979) and Moerk (1974). It was also seen to play a highly significant role in the growth of their emergent reading behaviour similar to that seen by Holdaway (1979).

It can be concluded that, given the opportunity, the children selected some stories to be read repeatedly and that this repeated reading facilitated their development of reading-like behaviour and their confidence in their own ability to learn to "read" their favourite stories in this way. On the other hand, it was seen that, where the choice of stories to be read remained with the parent, they tended not to select a favourite story to be reread and in so doing restricted the development of their children's reading-like behaviour and their confidence in their own ability to learn to "read" their stories in this way.

The Presence of an Older Sibling in the Shared Book Experience. All three families involved in this study were two children families, each with an age difference of fifteen months to eighteen months between the children. Usually, the two children were read to together, unless one child was not home, or one chose not to join in the experience.

When both children were read to together, the older child was observed to dominate the overt participation to the virtual exclusion of the younger child. On occasions, the older children were observed also to restrict and even prevent any attempted overt participation on the part of the younger child.

Although all the parents were aware of the dominant role played by their older child in the shared book experiences, they made little or no attempt to control this behaviour but simply tried to ignore it.

The effect of the dominant role of the older sibling on the younger one was somewhat different in each of the families. In Gillian's case it did not cause her to refrain from joining the shared book experience or to be any less attentive during the reading. Her participation however, was more covert rather than overt. Her mother noted a considerable increase in Gillian's reading-like behaviour when she read to her on her own after her brother started school. With Sean, the effect seemed more serious since his mother reported difficulty obtaining and holding his attention during story reading.

Jennifer was never observed deliberately stopping her younger brother from participating in the reading yet she completely dominated the participatory activity and regularly restricted her brother to a passive role during the shared reading experience. As a result, Christopher frequently left the shared book experience or refrained from joining in the first place.

It can be concluded that the older sibling consistently restricted the younger sibling's overt participation in the story reading, and that the parents recognized the dominant role but did little to prevent it from occurring. This contributed to the reduction of the overt participation of the younger siblings and even prevented them from joining the shared book experiences on occasions. The effects of this will be referred to later.

The Physical Position of the Book, the Parent and the Children. Parents were observed holding the reading materials so that the children had a clear view of the illustrations and print. If something obstructed the children's vision, they quickly made adjustments to get a clear view.

All of the parents were also observed "pointing to the print" while reading, although one mother assumed a position which often made this activity difficult. The pointing behaviours of the parents ranged from running their fingers along underneath a line of print, to pointing to specific features in the print such as the title of the story and to particular words and letters, sometimes in response to the children's questions. On occasion, the children were observed pointing to the print, identifying a particular word or letter they recognized, or asking a question as to what a particular word "says." The parents' unsolicited pointing to the print behaviour appeared to occur incidentally and they could give no specific reasons as to why they engaged in the activity.

While some of the children's learning about written language and reading was almost certainly coming from their experience with environmental language and from their own attempts at writing, the shared book experiences with their parents were a rich source of learning for them also. By being in constant close visual and physical contact with the source of their stories in the company of a parent, the children were observed to be developing an extensive range of understanding of books, print and reading. They demonstrated soon after the data collecting process began, that they knew where the title of a story was to be found, what a page was, where the front and the back of the book were, where the beginning and the end of the story were and where to start reading a story. They were observed to be in the process of learning that the print rather than the pictures in a book carried the message and two of them had begun to use at least some of the visual information on the page to confirm their predictions as they engaged in reproducing a story through reading-like behaviour. They were learning to distinguish between a word and a letter with increasing confidence and competency, they could distinguish between print and scribble and two of them could recognize when print was upside down. Barney (1976), in his study of the reading development of preschool children in New Zealand, found that they had developed a similar range of understandings.

But not only was the close physical proximity of the parent, the book and the children able to provide a base for them to develop their concepts of books, print and reading, the physical closeness provided a constant warm, human sharing condition which supplied the children with another learning opportunity. Because books were the focus of attention, and because their reading almost always took place in an intensely secure, relaxed and communal atmosphere, the possibility of books themselves coming to possess these kinds of attributes through repeated association with the experience became apparent. The positive effects of the children's attitudes towards books and reading resulting from this experience could be seen in the behaviour of all the children involved in the study, while the negative effects on attitude development of being excluded from the sharing experience was witnessed developing in Jennifer's brother.

It can be concluded that these children, through being placed regularly in close physical and visual contact with books, print and their parents as they were being read to, were able to develop an extensive range of understandings, skills and attitudes in relation to books, print and reading.

The Reading Techniques of the Parents

A number of factors related to the way in which the parents were observed reading to and with their children were seen to exert an influence on the development of the children's emergent reading behaviour. The rate at which the parents read, the way in which participation in story reading developed, the parents' reaction to this participation, the manner in which they asked and answered questions concerning the story being read, and the technical quality of their reading, all contributed in various ways to the reading development of their children.

The Rate of the Parents' Reading. There appeared to be a consistent relationship between the rate at which favourite stories were reread to the children, and the amount of the children's overt participation through reading-like behaviour.

All the parents varied their rates when they were reading to their children. It was noted however that the fathers as a rule, read more slowly than the mothers. It was also noted that the children tended to participate through 'mumble,' 'cooperative' or 'completion' reading more when the fathers read than when the mothers did so. The mothers, however, were observed on many occasions to slow their reading down to encourage the children to participate overtly in the reading. This process of adjusting the rate of reading to suit the children in order to allow for participation through reading-along with a reader was reported by Hoskisson (1974) in his studies of "assisted reading." McNinch (1974) also found that children comprehended oral language more effectively when the rate of presentation was closest to their own rate of speaking.

It can be concluded that the rate at which these children were reread their favourite stories influenced the extent and manner in which they were able to participate in the reading.

Developing Participation in Story Reading. During the first reading of a story the parents were seldom observed making any efforts to have the children participate overtly in the experience, unless they did so by asking predictive type questions. When stories were being reread, however, all the parents were observed making seemingly instinctively-based attempts to encourage their children to share in the activity overtly to a greater or lesser extent.

Just as Moerk's (1974) mothers did as they reread favourite stories to their children, these parents used the technique of pausing at some point in their reading of the story where the word or ending of the sentence was highly predictable, to allow the children to 'complete' the reading. This oral cloze or 'completion' type reading was seen being used by all the parents, and as they continued to reread a particular favourite, they would leave more and more of the story for the children to complete. The children almost invariably reacted by completing the reading and demonstrating their pleasure at being able to do so by participating with increased frequency.

If a story was especially well-known, parents would sometimes deliberately misread some part of it and the children would usually immediately correct them. This would occur also on occasions when the parent accidentally miscued as he or she read a well known story.

The expressed purpose of the parents in encouraging the children to participate actively in the reading was to enhance the shared nature of the experience and to make it more enjoyable. It was not seen by any of the parents as a way to have their children memorize their stories. In fact, much of the impetus for involving the children in the reading in this way seemed to come from the children's own self-directed efforts to participate actively in the reading.

It can be concluded that, while rereading favourite stories to their children, parents would encourage and facilitate the development of overt reading-like behaviour in them by pausing at various points or by deliberately misreading portions. The children usually responded to this opportunity with enthusiasm and pleasure and much of the impetus for the parents reading in this way originated in the children's own self-directed efforts to share actively in the reading.

Parents' Reactions to the Children's Participation in the Reading. The interview and observation data revealed that the parents varied in their reactions to the children's attempts to participate in the reading of the story through reading-like behaviour.

Although Kaaren's and Sean's mother freely admitted to finding the reading-like behaviour "aggravating," as the study progressed, she became increasingly tolerant of the behaviour. She even seemed to encourage it at times by rereading favourite stories and by providing the opportunity for the children to participate by pausing at points and by reading more slowly. However, when the children did attempt to reproduce parts of a story through reading-like behaviour, the mother tended occasionally to require them to do so accurately and would frequently correct their approximations. This had the immediate effect of reducing, if not eliminating the children's reading-like behaviour.

The parents of Gillian and Jennifer and the father of Kaaren and Sean saw the participation of their children in the reading of a story through reading-like behaviour in a positive light. They consistently invited the children to participate in the rereading of a favourite story, but were never seen to demand it. They demonstrated pleasure at the children's attempts to reproduce parts or the whole of a story and seldom tried to correct their approximations. These actions and attitudes seemed to encourage the children to engage in playing the role of a reader. These children were able to reproduce their favourite stories with increasing accuracy and confidence.

None of the parents saw the reading-like behaviour as contributing in specific ways to the development of the children's emergent reading behaviour. They were surprised and impressed by the children's ability to reproduce their stories with varying degrees of accuracy, sometimes after hearing a story only once, and they saw it as a means of enhancing the shared quality of the experience.

It can be concluded that parents, by maintaining positive and non-corrective attitudes towards their children participating in the reading of their stories, facilitated the development of reading-like behaviour in their children, but that they were unaware of the specific contributions that this behaviour could make to the children's reading development.

Asking and Answering Questions. All of the parents were observed asking and answering questions during the reading experience. Their questions were frequently of a predictive kind which encouraged the children to anticipate the action of the story. The children's understanding of the meanings of certain words were checked occasionally as were their interpretations of some of the pictures. The question asking strategies were never extended to the point of interfering with the enjoyment of the story but seemed to be aimed at increasing the children's involvement in it. They were almost always of a kind that the children could answer easily. If the children could not provide an answer to a question, the parents would quickly provide it, rather than probe persistently.

When the children asked questions of their parents concerning something that was puzzling them, the parents almost invariably referred to some past experience of the children that would clarify their explanation. Their responses were usually simple and direct and seldom interrupted the reading of the story. This immediate and optimal moment quality of the asking and answering of questions by both the parents and their children is similar to that observed by McKenzie (1976) in her observation of the conditions under which children learn oral language.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the parents' asking and answering of questions during the reading of a story were used to add to the children's involvement in and understanding of the particular story being read.

The Characteristics of Parents' Oral Reading. The quality of the parents' oral reading was generally very good and often excellent. Phrasing and use of intonation patterns were well-suited to the material being read and provided the children with very good models to emulate when they attempted to reproduce the stories for themselves. At times the parents would excell themselves and would bring feelings of suspense, fear, joy, sadness, fun and excitement to the story through their skillful use of voice. The absolute attention and the emotional involvement of the children during reading of this kind gave clear evidence of its power to contribute towards the development of the children's imaginations and attitudes.

The quality of the parents' reading was seen to add to the urge the children demonstrated to have some stories read again and again. In turn, the children gained varying degrees of mastery over these stories through their reading-like behaviour.

It can be concluded that, through their skillful use of oral reading techniques the parents were able to provide their children with excellent models to emulate, to stimulate them to develop and use their imaginations and to add to the growth of positive attitudes towards books and reading. This in turn contributed to the children's desire to master the task for themselves so that they could return to their stories and "read" them independently using their own patterns of phrasing and intonation to interpret the meanings of their stories more fully.

Research Question 2

What are the characteristics of reading-like behaviour as it occurs in preschool children?

The Development of Reading-Like Behaviour

In the previous section a number of references have been made to the reading-like behaviour of the children when interacting with their parents. This section will discuss the conclusions related to the questions of when, why and how reading-like behaviour was used by the children as a means for retrieving their favourite stories.

When Did Reading-Like Behaviour Appear? All the parents reported the appearance of reading-like behaviour in its overt form quite early in their children's lives. The mothers of Gillian, Jennifer and Kaaren commented that it was first noted when these children were between one and two years old. With Gillian and Jennifer it occurred with the rereading of nursery rhymes. With Kaaren, it appeared with a favourite story being reread to her by her grandmother.

This finding concurs with those of Bissex (1979), Church (1966), Holdaway (1979) and Moerk (1974) who reported the behaviour appearing during the second and third years. These studies reported its occurrence as an outcome of the children being read and reread favourite stories and nursery rhymes.

It can be concluded that the children in this study also began to use reading-like behaviour quite early in their lives.

Why Did Reading-Like Behaviour Appear? None of the parents could give any reasons for the appearance of reading-like behaviour in their children and none of them seemed to have made any conscious or deliberate efforts to have their children learn to "read" their stories although they all encouraged and facilitated their participation in the reading at times. The behaviour seems to have appeared spontaneously and the parents expressed surprise at the way in which their children could retrieve increasing amounts of their favourite stories for themselves.

An examination of the conditions which gave rise to the occurrence of reading-like behaviour provides at least some reasons for its appearance. All the children were living in homes which could be considered to be book-oriented. From very early in their lives they had seen books being used by their parents and had, on regular occasions, been part of that experience with books. The children frequently saw an adult, who was important in their lives, modelling the behaviour of reading and they were often allowed to be part of the activity which grew to be a most enjoyable and rewarding experience for them. Books came to be associated with this intensely pleasurable experience.

When children are placed in a state of disequilibrium with regard to their control over any part of their immediate environment, they will, as Piaget (1960) suggests, embark on a process of achieving equilibration by attempting to gain mastery over that particular facet of their environment. If the activity gives pleasure and is intrinsically rewarding to them, then their striving to reproduce the behaviour, will be even more persistent. This repetitive behaviour which originates in an intrinsic desire to achieve mastery over some particular part of their outside world was also observed in young children by White (1959) and Elkind (1967).

It was evident from the results obtained from questioning the children concerning their understanding of what was involved in reading, that they believed for some time as Sartre (1964) had done, that reading a story was the same as telling a story. To learn to read a story all they had to do was to listen as their parents read to them and follow along. Reading a story was essentially an oral process and the story was "held in the head" of the reader rather than on the printed pages. The reproduction process was aimed at producing the meaning and sequence of the story rather than an accurate rendition of all the words. Because of their ability, as Stross (1978) discovered, to retain large chunks of language seemingly with little effort, and their natural aptitude to develop schemata for various types of stories, as Applebee (1979), Guthrie (1977), Kintsch (1976) and others have found, the process of reproducing their much loved stories became a relatively simple task for them.

When these natural aptitudes were combined with the parents repeatedly reading favourite stories which frequently had highly predictable patterns of language and their reading incorporated deliberate pauses to invite their children to complete a phrase or a sentence, participation in the form of reading-like behaviour was almost assured.

It can be concluded that, by providing their children with the opportunity to witness and share regularly in the experience of the reading process being modelled on a repetitive basis by some significant adult figure in their world, the parents were establishing the conditions for reading-like behaviour to become an intrinsically motivated, developmental task for their children to learn.

How Did the Children Learn Reading-Like Behaviour?

It was distinctly noticeable that during the first reading of a new story the children would usually sit listening in an avidly attentive manner. It was during subsequent rereadings that they would begin overtly to participate, initially at points in the story where the language was highly predictable. During the first few rereadings of a story, the children seemed to be engaging in a silent rehearsal as the parent read. This was made apparent by the way they would correct some of the miscues made by the reader or by the way they were able to "close the gap" promptly when the reader paused at some point in the story.

The strategies that the children used to gain independent access to their favourite stories were varied and, in part at least, dependent on the way the stories were read to them. Reference has already been made to the way in which parents used the oral cloze strategy of completion reading to encourage the children to participate in the reading. This was a strategy used by the parents. Most of the strategies used by the children to learn to retrieve their stories through reading-like behaviour were created by themselves. One such strategy was mumble reading which tended to be dependent on the pace at which the story was read. The first intelligible mumbles which appeared were generally key words with the intervening words disappearing into an unintelligible murmur. Gradually more and more words became decipherable as the children became increasingly confident in their predictions. Gradually also, rather than coming in with the words just after the reader had started to say them, their production came to be more in unison with the reader.

Mumble reading led naturally to cooperative reading where the reading became a mutually shared responsibility. Unlike mumble reading, where the children tended to stay just behind the reader and only occasionally "read" in unison, in cooperative reading they would much more frequently be reading in unison with a greater degree of confidence. This confidence in turn, would cause them at times, to take the lead in reproducing the story. As with mumble reading, cooperative reading was an intuitively created strategy which all the children were seen to employ, but to a large extent it was dependent once again on the reader reading at a relatively slow pace, unless the story was one that was already well-known to the children.

A strategy which was used only occasionally by the children, was that of echo reading. Here the reader read a phrase or a short sentence and the children echoed what had been read. Like mumble and completion reading, echo reading seemed to be a strategy used instinctively by the children to try to learn to "read" their stories more quickly through being able to repeat quite large chunks of language.

It can be concluded that the children began to participate in the reading of their stories with their parents through the completion of reading strategies used by their parents and through the strategies of mumble, cooperative and echo reading which the children themselves intuitively developed and used when the conditions were suitable.

The Characteristics of Reading-Like Behaviour

From directly observing reading-like behaviour as it developed and occurred, a number of its characteristics became apparent. The conclusions related to these characteristics are discussed under headings of: reproducing meaning or rote memorization and fluent and arhythmic reading-like behaviour.

Reproducing Meaning or Rote Memorization. A superficial examination of reading-like behaviour may lead to the impression that it is the result of children attempting to memorize by rote the words of a story at an imitative level. A careful analysis of the transcripts of the behaviour demonstrated very clearly however, that this was not the case.

The outstanding feature of the children's efforts to retrieve their stories through reading-like behaviour, was their constant striving to reproduce the meaning of their stories. They were not concerned initially with the surface structure accuracy of their reproductions. They demonstrated a marked and consistent ability to listen to a story being read, absorb its language patterns and schema, and then reproduce it, maintaining the original schema, but using many of their own written language constructions to express the meaning of the story.

Sometimes the children's reproductions of the story resulted in a précis of the original. At other times the original story was embellished with the children's own interpretations, which frequently improved the quality of the original story. Usually the sequence, plot, character development, and other main features of the story remained intact and the children's efforts provided excellent examples of the ability of young children to generate and create language, and to use the patterns of written language to do so.

The way in which the children were able to transform the original language of the story, but still maintain the author's story schema was a clear example of the deep level processing that was occurring. The ability of young children to do this as a result of listening to stories read to them was noted also by Applebee (1979) and Holdaway (1979) in their studies.

These children also developed, eventually, a remarkable ability to reproduce with a high degree of accuracy, most, if not all of the original language of a favourite book. If the story was being read to them repeatedly and they were able to participate either overtly or covertly, their original approximation of the author's language, gradually grew to be increasingly in agreement with the original.

The ability of all the children to learn to reproduce a story through reading-like behaviour quickly, was seen particularly when the book was of the highly predictive kind and contained repetitive, rhyming and cumulative patterns. Exact "reading" sometimes began with books of this type during the first reading. The greater the experience of the children in listening to stories, the more rapidly this process was seen as likely to occur. Just as Stross (1978) had found in his studies of the language learning ability of young children, the children involved in this study also seemed at times to possess the auditory equivalent of an eidetic memory. They could reproduce large chunks of language they had heard with relative ease.

It can be concluded that the children's efforts to retrieve their favourite stories through reading-like behaviour, was the result of their striving to reproduce the meaning of their stories from a basis of their internalization of the story schema and the patterns of written language. Given suitable conditions they could learn to do so quickly and easily, especially when a story contained highly predictable language.

Fluent and Arhythmic Reading-Like Behaviour. As long as the children's understanding of what was involved in reading remained at the level of thinking that reading a story was the same as telling a story without any reference to the print, their overt reading-like behaviour was usually fluent, expressive and confident. They page matched on the basis of the pictures. Their "reading" was, as Beimiller (1970) suggested, "contextually dependent" and they displayed all the surface level characteristics of a competent adult oral reader. All the children involved in this study displayed reading-like behaviour of this type.

Gradually however, the children developed an increased understanding of the relationship between the print on the page and what was being read. As their awareness of this grew they came to realize more and more that what they were saying as they engaged in reading-like behaviour, could and should be matched with what they were seeing in the form of the print on the pages. Their growing awareness of this was usually signified by their asking such questions as "Where does it say that?" or "Where are you reading now?" or "What does that say?", pointing to a particular word.

As they became increasingly confident and accurate at the word level in their "reading" of a favourite story through engaging in rereading it cooperatively with their parents on many occasions, their fluent pattern of "reading" would become more measured. Through their continued attempts to match what they were saying with what they were seeing, their "reading" became more arhythmic and voice pointing and finger pointing began to appear.

It can be concluded that, as the children were able to reproduce their favourite stories with greater accuracy through reading-like behaviour and as they became increasingly aware of the presence of the print on the pages of these stories, their fluent reading-like behaviour began to be characterized by periods of arhythmic voice and finger pointing. By so doing they were learning to match what they were saying with what they were seeing with increasing accuracy.

The Contribution of Reading-Like Behaviour to Reading Development

The results obtained from this study provide a clear indication of the significant role that reading-like behaviour was able to play in the reading development of the preschool children involved in this study. Once they began to retrieve their favourite stories through reading-like behaviour, they were doing more than playing the role of a reader. They were providing themselves with the opportunity to learn to read by reading, and in the process, were learning to use strategies that many proficient adult readers use.

The contribution that reading-like behaviour was making to the reading development of these children has been examined under the headings of: learning the patterns of written language and story schema; learning the functions and forms of written language; the development of reading strategies and; the development of attitudes towards reading.

Learning the Patterns of Written Language and Story Schema. In reading, our ability to predict what is coming next on the page on the basis of our knowledge of the syntax of the language has been shown by researchers such as Smith (1978) and Goodman (1976) to be an extremely important part of the process. Coupled with this, being familiar with the structure of the written language we are reading in terms of its schema, has been found by researchers such as Kintsch (1974) and Meyer (1975) to be closely related to our ability to comprehend what we are reading. Through being read to extensively from books which presented a great variety of written language structures, and an extensive range of at least narrative story schema, the children were being provided with the opportunity to gain control over these patterns and schemata.

All the children involved in this study demonstrated their ability to master the more intricate structures of written language and story schema by being able to reproduce their stories through reading-like behaviour. Although the patterns of written language reproduced at this stage usually only approximated the original, it has been noted that the story schema was able to be reconstructed with a remarkable degree of similarity. By engaging regularly in this process the children were seen to be laying the foundations for their further development as readers for whom prediction on the basis of the syntax of the language and the meaning of the story being read would probably pose few difficulties.

It can be concluded that, in exhibiting reading-like behaviour and using it to retrieve favourite stories for themselves, these children were demonstrating their ability to incorporate the patterns of written language and the range of story schema into their background of knowledge and to use this knowledge to reconstruct their stories. As developing readers, this ability was seen to be particularly important since it contributes so much to the reader's use of syntactically and semantically based prediction strategies.

Learning the Function and Form of Written Language. Listening to language being used in a great variety of ways in their stories, undoubtedly provided vicarious experiences for these children with the dimensions of Halliday's (1973) multi-functional, meaning-based view of language. It was the process of their active retrieval of their favourite stories however, that provided them with direct experience in using these diverse functions of language in highly expressive ways.

As well as providing the children with this multidimensional experience with the functions of language, their reading-like behaviour enabled them to begin to examine the form of written language. It was not until they could reproduce a favourite story, or parts of it, with confidence and accuracy, that the children were seen to begin to attend to visual features of written language. This was signified by their switching from fluent "reading" to the more arhythmical "reading" which involved voice and/or finger pointing as they tried to eye-ear-voice match in reproducing the story.

It can be concluded that, through reading-like behaviour these children were provided with the opportunity to obtain experience with using the multi-functional dimensions of meaning contained in the language of their stories to reconstruct their meaning. As they learned to do this with increasing confidence and accuracy, they began to examine the visual features of the written language in more detail and to use their knowledge of these features to aid them to retrieve their stories more accurately.

The Development of Reading Strategies. As well as providing the children with the opportunity to gain control over the patterns of written language, to become familiar with a range of story schema, to further internalize their understanding and use of the functional aspects of language and to begin to examine in some detail the visual features of written language, reading-like behaviour actually incorporated the development of some very important reading strategies.

1. Self-correction. It was clearly evident that, as the children were engaged in retrieving their favourite stories, they were constantly monitoring what they were producing for meaning. Careful examination of the transcripts revealed that only on rare occasions did any of them leave a "miscue" uncorrected that did not make sense or sound like language. By consistently self-correcting "miscues" that did not meet these criteria, the children were displaying a behaviour which Clay (1972) found to be characteristics of high progress readers. She also found that children learning to read with difficulty engaged in little self correcting behaviour, even where their miscues were semantically and syntactically unacceptable. Through persistently monitoring their reading-like behaviour for its meaning and language qualities, the children involved in this study were developing control over their own delicate feedback mechanisms.

2. Expressiveness. One of the outstanding features of the children's reading-like behaviour in its overt form was the sophisticated level of expression they were able to bring to their rendition of their stories. The skillful

use they made for example of intonation, phrasing, and stress, gave the impression of a fluent reader.

A careful inspection of their expressive techniques revealed that, in many instances, they were not imitating their parents' rendition of the story. At times Gillian's use of intonation patterns was superior to those of the adult who was reading the story with her. By bringing their own feelings and imagination to bear on the task the children were creating their own modes of expressing these. They were deeply involved in "learning how to mean" through reproducing their stories and they were demonstrating very clearly the way in which the intonational system could be used to convey and clarify meaning. Just as Holdaway (1979) found in his examination of reading-like behaviour, these qualities came to be associated by the children with the use of the written dialect in stories.

3. Re-running. All the children were occasionally seen to use the strategy of re-running when they came to a part of their story which they could not reproduce. They appeared to return instinctively to the beginning of the unit of language they were dealing with and reread, seemingly to regain or to reinforce the feeling for the syntactic and semantic coherence of what they were "reading." Re-running was a strategy that both Clay (1972) and Holdaway (1979) observed young children using in their

attempts to retrieve their stories and Newman (1981) found that fluent adult readers reported using the strategy when they came to something that they did not understand or a word they did not know.

4. Strategy selection. As reading-like behaviour began to be characterized by a spontaneous movement to and from fluent and arhythmic "reading," particularly evident in the case of Gillian, another very important reading strategy was observed being used. She would "read" a sentence fluently, relying on her syntactic and semantic resources. She would then "re-read" carefully, using voice pointing (and sometimes her finger) to check that at least some of the visual information on the page in the form of graphophonic cues (usually initial letter cues) confirmed the predictions she had made. On occasion, Gillian would demonstrate that she had the potential to become a visually dependent reader in the Biemiller (1970) sense. As she was engaged in methodically matching what she was saying with what she was seeing, she would pause for a long period of time on a particular word, sometimes audibly attempting to use her inadequately developed graphophonic knowledge to unlock the unknown word. She would also, at times, take a fluent re-run at the sentence to regain the syntactic and semantic cohesion of the unit of language. If these strategies failed her, she would either omit the word altogether, making an appropriate substitution, or

reconstruct the sentence, manipulating the syntax to maintain grammatical agreement and the sense of the story.

The strategy of selecting the appropriate cues from the visual and non-visual sources of information in reading on a hypothesis-test basis has been seen by Goodman (1976b) and Smith (1978) to be central to the process of reading. It appeared that by shifting spontaneously to and from fluent and arhythmical reading-like behaviour, Gillian at least, was obtaining the opportunity to learn to use the selectivity principle intuitively, in order to retrieve her stories for herself.

5. Eye-movements. Reading-like behaviour also provided the opportunity for the physiomotor skills required to control their eyes during reading to become established. The delicately controlled saccadic movements of the eyes required to maintain fluent reading is probably developed most easily through the process of reading. It would seem likely also, that the control of these movements has to develop from an implicit, inner direction rather than from any conscious efforts or externally imposed instruction.

Through their use of reading-like behaviour which began to stay at the print matching stage rather than the page and picture matching one, these young children were provided with the opportunity to learn where and how to look at print without any conscious effort on their part. The fine motor control of the eyes necessary for fluent reading was able to become part of their developmental experience and it would appear that Gillian may even have moved to the rather more complex stage of keeping her eyes ahead of her voice when retrieving one of her favourite stories orally.

It can be concluded that, through their use of reading-like behaviour these children were provided with the opportunity to develop and use the strategies of self-correction, expressiveness, re-running, and strategy selection and to learn to control the movement of their eyes in terms of knowing where to look and what to look at on the pages of their stories. Since all these can be seen as fundamental strategies for reading it follows that reading-like behaviour was contributing in important ways to these children's reading development.

The Development of Attitudes Towards Reading and Learning to Read

Reference has been made already to the way in which books were able to become associated with the extremely positive, secure and enjoyable atmosphere which pervaded the shared book experiences of the children. The inordinately long attention spans they displayed when they were in the company of their parents and their books was a measure of the pleasure they derived from being read to.

Just as Callaway (1974) found with his son, these children had developed "an insatiable appetite" for having stories read to them.

By learning to retrieve their favourite stories for themselves through reading-like behaviour, these children were able to recreate independently the pleasure they derived from being with their books. The lengthy period of independent activity with books was also characteristic of the children observed by Smith (1963) and Rhodes (1979).

Not only were the children developing extremely positive attitudes towards books and reading, and exceptionally long attention spans when they were alone with their books or with their parents listening to their stories, by learning to retrieve their stories for themselves through reading-like behaviour, they were being provided with the opportunity to develop what Entwisle (1971) and Coleman (1966) referred to as their "control beliefs," in respect of learning to read. Through the process of being able to gain independent access to their favourite books, they were developing confidence in their own ability to exercise control over books and reading.

It can be concluded that, through reading-like behaviour these children were able to retrieve for themselves the intensely pleasurable experiences they had obtained through being read to thereby reinforcing and furthering the development of their positive attitudes towards books and reading. In addition, in the process of gaining this independent access to their books, they were developing their confidence in being able to exercise their control over these books through learning to read.

Research Question 3

> Are the principles which govern oral language learning the same or similar as those principles which govern learning to read?

Conditions for Language Learning

From the time children are born they are immersed in oral language being used in highly functional ways. The constant stream of language which is directed at newborn children during their waking hours by those around them is not presented to the children for the purpose of direct instruction or imitation, or even because the parents think that they will understand what is being said to them. The children are exposed to and involved in language being used in all its complexity, because parents seem to know instinctively that in order to begin to learn this language the children have got to have the opportunity to first of all experience it being used in meaningful ways.

Although the children involved in this study were not observed from the time that they were first read to, the results of the retrospective interviews with the parents indicated that their children started responding to the experience of being read to soon after it commenced very early in their lives. They began to recognize favourite books and to learn to handle them physically. They began to demonstrate great pleasure at being read to and to demand repetition of the experience. The parents also reported that the children soon started participating in the reading of favourite stories and nursery rhymes as they were read and reread. By being immersed on regular occasions in book experience situations the children had been provided with the opportunity to learn a great deal about books and reading.

Just as no predetermined level of "readiness" had been established for their listening and responding to oral language, so too was no predetermined level of "readiness" required for them to begin to respond to stories, nursery rhymes and jingles. No formal instruction was needed to make them listen to and learn to enjoy these stories, rhymes and jingles. Nor was any formal instruction used to begin them on the road to establishing their understanding of the directionality and presence of print on the pages of their books. They did not have to be told to embark on the process of using the various strategies they employed to gain independent access to their favourite stories and then to proceed to use these as a means of extending their knowledge of the specific visual features of print and of other important reading strategies. All these children seemed to need to begin to learn to read to a parent who would consistently demonstrate how books could be used in pleasurable ways, who would respond to their requests to "Read it again," and who would invite and encourage them to participate in the activity of reading.

It can be concluded that, given the similar conditions of immersion and involvement which generally prevail for oral language learning, these children were able to begin to learn to read without any predetermined "readiness" requirements or deliberate instruction.

Starting with Whole, Meaningful Language

Parents begin and continue to talk to their children using whole, meaningful language. The decisions as to what parts of this language will be experimented with, the amount of productive experimentation and at what rate language learning occurs are, under normal conditions, left with the children. The environment, as Newman (1980) suggests "is emulative rather than instructive" and the children select from a multitude of experiences with language what they want to learn in order to communicate their needs. Any response is usually immediately reacted to and that reaction is invariably positive, supportive and frequently elaborated by the ~~parent~~. The children are encouraged to embark on a process of experimentation and successive approximation through which they begin to generate their own system of rules for their language in order to communicate with increasing effectiveness. The process of learning is internally monitored, regulated and corrected.

The children involved in this study started to learn to read from experiencing whole, meaningful stories being read and reread to them. Just as with Bissex's (1979) son Paul, they learned to recognize stories before they recognized words. In learning to "read" their favourite stories, they engaged in a process of experimentation and successive approximation with the active support at times of their parents, until they could reproduce these stories with a high degree of accuracy through reading-like behaviour. Where the active support for this learning was slow in forthcoming and correct responses were expected for their attempts, the rate of learning was a great deal slower and the experimentation not nearly as frequent or as confident.

Initially at least, the opportunity for this learning had to be provided by the parents, who, through the technique of completion reading facilitated the participation of the children in the reading. But the children demonstrated their own ability to provide for their own learning also, by developing and using the techniques of mumble, co-operative and echo reading. Nobody had to teach them these procedures for gaining control over their favourite stories. They created them and used them at appropriate times without any external direction. Nor did they have to be taught how to deal with the more complicated structures of written language or to learn the various story schemata. They seemed to develop control over these features of written language as naturally as they developed their control over the syntax and meaning of oral language.

As well as regulating and directing most of their strategies and efforts to learn to "read" their favourite stories, they also monitored and corrected their own attempts to do so on the basis of what made sense and what sounded like language. Gradually, through their own self-directed strategies and through their changing understanding of what was involved in reading, they started to match what they were seeing on the page with what they were saying. As their linguistic awareness of the presence and form of the print grew, and their understanding of its relationship to reading developed, they were able to embark on a process of building their knowledge of the rule system which governed its construction by going from the known sounds of words and parts of words to their representation in the print.

By starting with whole meaningful stories, they were able to gain control over the semantic and syntactic dimensions of written language. By then proceeding to familiarize themselves with the specific aspects of its construction down to the word and letter level, the children's learning was following the orthogenetic principles enunciated by Werner (1957) for all human learning and its subsequent application by Lenneberg (1967) to language learning. The movement from "relative globality" to "increasing differentiation, articulation and hierarchic integration" was evident in the children's growing control of the manner in which they were able to retrieve their favourite stories and in the refining of the process by which they were able to do so.

It can be concluded that, just as in oral language learning where whole, meaningful language provides the starting point, these children began to learn to read through the whole, meaningful language of their stories. Again, as in oral language learning their learning to read was characterized by experimentation, successive approximation and self-direction as it occurred in an environment that was emulative, responsive and supportive. Their learning was seen to be following orthogenetic principles by moving from the generalized global control of whole stories to an increasingly finer control of the processes involved in reproducing these.

Linguistic Awareness

When children are involved in the process of learning oral langauge no attempt is made to make them consciously aware of what they are learning or how they should go about the process. Any attempt to do so, the linguists point out would seriously interfere with the children's learning and would create difficulties. Children have demonstrated consistently that they do not need to be consciously aware of what, how or even why they are learning their language, but under normal conditions, they proceed to do so with remarkable efficiency. Their attention is focussed on receiving and conveying meaning as effectively and as efficiently as possible and in learning how to use language to meet their needs and to control people around them.

The children in this study also demonstrated, in the way in which they were going about learning to read, that their prime focus was on meaning and on reconstructing meaning. These children did not set out consciously and constructively to learn the patterns of written language or story schema, nor did they deliberately begin to learn to "read" their favourite stories for themselves, commencing to eye-ear-voice match as they were engaged in this process and establishing the range of concepts and skills related to the directionality of print. Their learning appeared to be occurring in a similar "transparent" or "out-of-awareness" manner to that described by Cazden (1975) in oral language learning.

It would appear that much of the children's knowledge about print and of the processes involved in retrieving it for themselves was at the level of what Francis (1979) refers to as "tacit knowledge" and had been achieved without conscious analysis or effort on their part. Learning to read for these children, was in fact functioning as a primary linguistic activity and their learning did not require, as Mattingly (1979) suggests, a "metalinguistic consciousness" for it to be effective. Just as in oral language learning they were managing the processes involved in learning to read in their own way without any explicit planned course of instruction or efforts to make them consciously aware of what they were learning or how they should go about the task.

Nor did the children's learning require some undetermined level of oral language competence. It had begun as a result of the children's experiences with being read to and its development was proceeding along with their oral language learning. Rather than having to wait until some undetermined level of competence was achieved in oral language before they could begin to learn to read, the children's early experience with reading and learning to read could be seen to be an important factor in facilitating oral language development. Just as Ackerman (1977) and Moerk (1974) found in their studies, these children, through active retrieval of their stories, were learning to use a greater variety of sentence structures and vocabulary than they would have been learning, had they not been involved in the repeated reading of their favourite stories. In a real sense, their reading-like behaviour provided these children with a much broader range of experiences in using language and facilitated their progress in learning to use language more meaningfully.

It can be concluded that, just as children's oral language learning is able to proceed without their being consciously aware of the processes involved, the children in this study, commenced to continue to learn to read without needing to be explicitly aware of what, how and why they were learning. It can also be concluded that, rather than their learning to read being dependent on a predetermined level of oral language competence, it interacted with and in some ways facilitated the development of their oral language.

Understanding the Concept of Reading

In learning the oral dimensions of their language, it has never been seen necessary for children to develop an understanding of the major concepts used to refer to these processes. Terms such as "speak" or "talk," "listen" or "hear" are left to be learned through experience and use. Although children demonstrate an ability to use these terms correctly in conversation, their abstract nature prevents them from being able to begin to analyse and to understand them fully before they reach approximately ten years of age (Gerth, 1969).

The data related to the development of the children's understanding of the concept of reading demonstrated the changing nature of their understanding. It demonstrated also how their understanding of the concept influenced their view of what was involved in learning to read and how difficult the task might be. It revealed how these young children could correctly use some of the terminology of reading (e.g. read, letter, word) in their conversation, and how, when their understanding was probed, their interpretation of the meaning of these concepts was found not always to coincide with the commonly accepted ones. Their understanding of these concepts was flexible, changing, and developing in accordance with the extent and nature of the children's experience with them.

It can be concluded that the children in this study were developing concepts about reading, including those normally associated with reading instruction. However, more important is the finding that their concepts were evolving out of their experiences and did not necessarily coincide with the usual definitions.

Research Question 4

What is the role of environmental language and learning to write, in the reading development of preschool children?

Environmental Language and Learning to Read

All the children had regular and easy access to environmental language of various kinds. Inside their homes they were exposed to food and drink labels and to the advertising language of television. Each family made use of magnetized plastic letters on their refrigerator doors to construct words which interested the children. Some of their books used written language in environmental ways through signs and labels in their pictures and on manipulative features and the children's magazines contained a great deal of written language in the form of instructions as to how to play the games and complete activities. Outside their homes they were exposed to a plethora of signs, labels and directions of various kinds as they went driving and shopping with their parents.

Although all of the children demonstrated a range of knowledge of various kinds of environmental language, it was not always possible to know whether they were responding to the stimulus of the highly contextualized setting or to the written language in particular. Even when they pointed to the words on the label of a cereal box after being asked how they knew what was in the box, it was not possible to know if they were using the print or the pictures. They may have initially responded to the pictures and then simply demonstrated their awareness of the presence of print on the packets as another source of information. There were some data obtained however, that indicated that the children were beginning to transfer this knowledge on occasion to reading.

All the children demonstrated an understanding of the purpose of much of the environmental language. The functions of various road signs, labels on food and drink, and names on particular buildings, particularly fast food outlets, were usually able to be described accurately. Kaaren and Gillian were also able to give valid reasons as to why their parents would read newspapers and magazines.

The children's experiences with environmental language of various kinds were clearly contributing to their understanding of the functions of written language, especially at Halliday's (1975) "instrumental," "regulatory," and "heuristic" levels as well as aiding the development of their awareness of print and its range of forms. While some of the learning was the outcome of direct questions asked of parents, most of it was occurring on a self-directed incidental basis, through direct (visiting a fast food outlet) or vicarious (television advertising) experiences. The parents expressed surprise at the extent of the children's knowledge of these forms of language.

It can be concluded that environmental language provided these children with a valuable source from which to extend their knowledge and awareness of both the functions and forms of written language in highly relevant ways.

Learning to Write and Learning to Read

At the commencement of the study, only Sean appeared to have little interest or experience in learning to write. The three girls were already making considerable progress, and were being encouraged and facilitated in their attempts by their parents.

The initial interest in learning to write seems to have originated in the children wanting to learn to write their own names. The receiving and sending of cards and letters also provided an ongoing stimulus for further writing activity.

Except for Sean, all the children had ready access to writing materials with Kaaren having a permanent and personal desk on which to write. Whereas her books had to be stored on shelves when they were not being used, she was permitted to leave her writing materials out on her desk in the family living room. Her efforts to experiment with producing writing were met with praise and enthusiasm on the part of her parents, and unlike her efforts to reproduce her stories through reading-like behaviour, her attempts were seldom corrected. These supportive conditions resulted in the live-in babysitter observing that Kaaren was more interested in learning to write than in learning to read and that this was reflected in the amount of time she would spend each day with her writing materials as compared with her books. She could print fluently in upper case letters and was also mastering their lower case forms as well.

Both Gillian and Jennifer enjoyed writing, but neither had a permanent place to write, nor would they attempt to write anything except words they were certain they could spell correctly, without someone being available to assist them with spelling. Although their parents encouraged experimentation and approximation in their reading-like behaviour, they tended to expect correctness in their writing. This appeared to come from their productive writing being invariably in the form of cards or letters to relatives or friends, which the parents usually required to contain words correctly spelled.

Although the parents would provide the children with any help they needed with their writing, there was no attempt to instruct or to force their progress. If the children asked for assistance in forming letters or spelling words, it was usually given immediately. The children received warm praise for their efforts at producing any writing and most of their practice was self-motivated and to a larger extent self-directed. But just as reading activities of the children reflected both the physical and the psychological conditions surrounding them, so too did the writing activities. Where materials for writing were always readily at hand and an experimental atmosphere prevailed, then the child engaged in a great deal of self-directed practice. Where the opposite conditions were present, then the practice became more parent dependent.

Through their learning to write activities, the children were providing themselves with yet another opportunity to gain experience with written language. The frequently purposeful nature of their writing offered them the opportunity to gain experience with Halliday's (1975) "interactional" ('I love you'), "personal" ('This is me') and at times "heuristic" ('What's that?' or 'Finding out') functions of langauge. By their constant attempts at spelling words they wanted to write (they seldom asked for the first letter of any word), these children were obtaining further experience with the sound-to-symbol system of written language. And finally, by their regular practice in producing written language for themselves, they must have been contributing to their awareness of the presence of print on the pages of their books and to their knowledge of its specific features.

It can be concluded that the learning to write activities of the three girls involved in the study were contributing to the development of their understanding of the functional nature of written language, to the sound-to-spelling relationships in written language, to their awareness of the presence of print on the pages of their books and to their knowledge of its specific features.

Implications

Within the limitations recorded for this study of the reading development of preschool children, the following implications have been drawn from the conclusions. Included are implications for reading theory and for research, for parents and for teachers.

Implications for the Theory of Reading and for Research

If, as the results of this study would appear to indicate, reading is a primary language learning process which seems to be able to begin when the children are first read to on a regular basis, a number of important implications become apparent in relation to the theory of reading and for research in reading. The developmental nature of the process, its relevance to current psycholinguistic theory, and both general and specific implications for those who would research emergent reading behaviour all require comment.

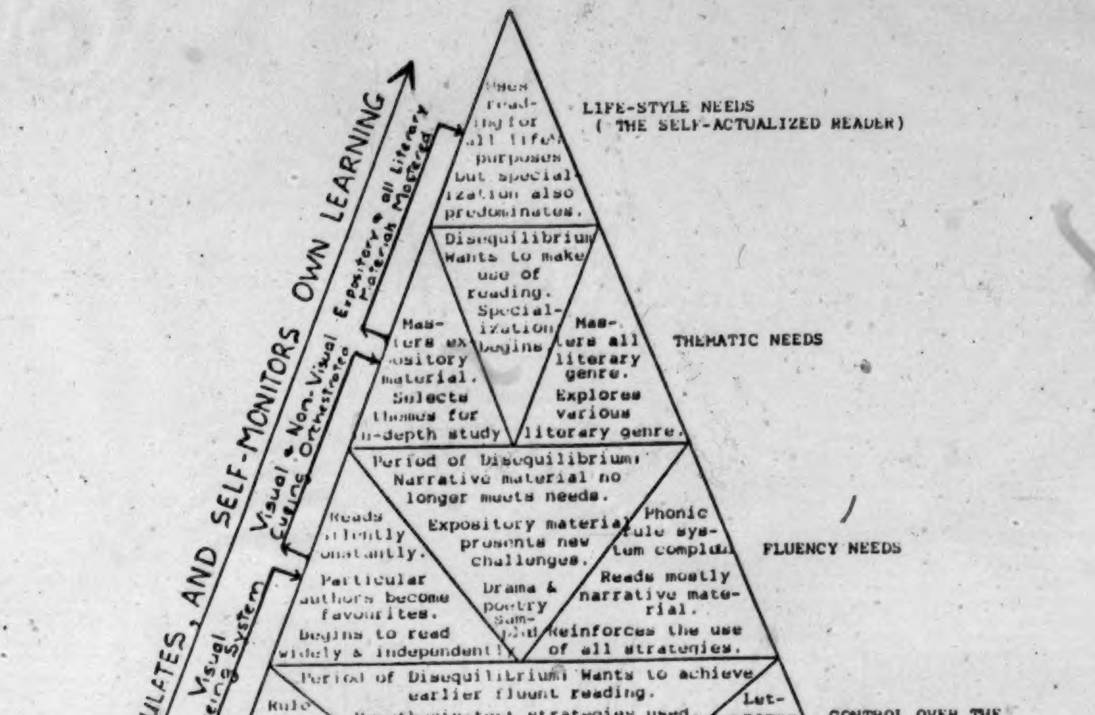
The Developmental Nature of Reading. Perhaps the most important implication arising from the results of this study for the theory of reading is that learning to read was seen to be a true developmental process just like learning to talk and walk. It was seen to be a product of the children's innate language learning ability and their experience with reading. The more they were immersed in the process being used in joyful ways and the more they were permitted to participate and to use the process in approximating ways without correction, the more likely they were to be able to make progress in extending their own natural abilities to control and regulate the learning of the processes themselves. It would seem entirely possible that learning to read under these circumstances had less to do with intelligence but a great deal to do with the experiences that were provided for the children with their books and reading.

Another important feature of this developmental model of reading which has implications for any theory of reading, is that the stages of development through which learning to read appears to progress, may well function in a similar manner to Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs. Craig (1976), in describing Maslow's theory, comments that "needs and therefore motivations, are hierarchically organized so that the lowest, or most basic, ones must be satisfied before the higher ones can even be considered" (p. 101). As a result of this study, it was possible to identify and describe the first three levels of a hierarchy of developmental reading needs.

According to Maslow, as experiences contribute to a particular level of need, not only is that area of need being fulfilled but the experiences are also laying the foundations for the next level of development. It would seem that, as a level of need is satisfied, the learners enter a state of disequilibrium with regard to their particular environment (in this case, their books) and begin to reach out and learn new strategies to gain further control over their particular environment. As the learners move through the succeeding levels of the hierarchy, the lower and more basic needs still play a vital role in their achieving full benefit from the experiences they require to satisfy the higher level need. However, because these lower needs have been fulfilled at their optimum time, they do not require attention from the learners so they are left free to devote their energy to obtaining experiences which will satisfy the higher level needs. The following is a description of the first three levels of developmental reading needs that were able to be identified as a result of this study along with an hypothesized projection of the three subsequent levels of development. A diagrammatic representation of the whole developmental hierarchy has been recorded in Figure 1.0.

1. Attitudinal needs. In order to provide the opportunity for children to develop positive and powerful attitudes towards books, reading and learning to read from very early in their lives, a number of conditions were seen to be important. The parents themselves should exhibit and convey positive feelings of enjoyment of books and reading. They should be prepared to read to their children frequently and for increasingly longer periods of time from very early in the children's lives. An adequate supply of good quality books should be readily accessible to the children who should be permitted to select some favourite stories for rereading by the parents. If younger siblings are read to in the company of older siblings, care should be taken to allow the younger siblings to participate in the reading at an overt level on an equal basis with the older sibling. Where optimum conditions were not present for two of the children involved in this study, their attitudes towards books and reading were seen to be less positive than those of the two children where optimum conditions prevailed.

By being read to regularly, these children demonstrated their enjoyment of the experience. Their attention spans increased and they began demanding certain favourites


SELF-DIRECTS, SELF-REGULATES, AND SELF-MONITORS OWN LEARNING
Inner Drive
Non-Visual Cueing System
Visual Cueing System
Visual + Non-Visual Cueing Orchestrated
Expository + all Literary Material Mastered
LIFE-STYLE NEEDS
(THE SELF-ACTUALIZED READER)
THEMATIC NEEDS
FLUENCY NEEDS
CONTROL OVER THE VISUAL DIMENSIONS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE NEEDS
CONTROL OVER THE ORAL DIMENSIONS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE NEEDS
ATTITUDE NEEDS

Uses reading for all life's purposes but specialization also predominates.

Disequilibrium: Wants to make use of reading. Specialization begins.

Masters expository material. Selects themes for in-depth study

Masters all literary genre. Explores various literary genre.

Period of Disequilibrium: Narrative material no longer meets needs.

Expository material presents new challenges.

Drama & poetry sampled

Reads silently constantly.

Particular authors become favourites.

Begins to read widely & independently

Phonic rule system complete

Reads mostly narrative material.

Reinforces the use of all strategies.

Period of Disequilibrium: Wants to achieve earlier fluent reading.

Hypothesis-test strategies used.

Begins to learn to select appropriate cues.

Fluent and arhythmical reading mixed.

Rule system for phonics develops.

Sound-to-letter cues used to confirm predictions.

Arhythmical reading-like behaviour appears.

Letter names and sight words learnt.

Convinced that print must be attended to when reading.

Exact matching at word-space-word level mastered.

Period of Disequilibrium: Wants to gain independent access to new stories.

Directionality leading to eye-ear-voice matching begins to develop. Implicit awareness of print.

Responds to environmental language and experiments with writing.

Self correcting.

Predicting.

Learns to use syntactic, semantic and intonation cueing systems.

Fluent reading-like behaviour develops with favourite stories.

Accuracy increases.

Confirming.

Reproducing meaning using written language structures: "Learning how to mean."

Participates through using completion, mumble, cooperative, &echo rdg.

Period of Disequilibrium: Wants to gain independent access to favourite books.

Begins to build predicting strategies. Participates spontaneously. Corrects parent's miscues.

Begins to become familiar with: patterns of written language; story schema, and; intonation patterns.

Ownership important.

Picture matching.

Physical control of books.

Imaginations stimulated.

Seeks repetition. Silent rehearsal.

Enjoys warm, human sharing with books.

Care of books.

Predictable books.

Independent book play.

Some participation starts.

Attention span increases.

Books and pleasure become associated.

A BOOK AND PRINT ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT.   PARENTS WHO READ TO THEIR CHILDREN.

Figure 1.0 : A HIERARCHY OF DEVELOPMENTAL READING NEEDS

to be read and ~~re~~read. Listening to the stories in the secure and close physical proximity of a loved parent was a deeply rewarding experience for these children. Through the sounds of the rhythms of the language, the stimulation provided their imaginations, and by reliving these experiences in anticipatory ways by listening to the stories repeatedly, these children developed very high expectations for books. Books were seen as sources of personal pleasure that could be obtained in no other way. They quickly learned how to handle them physically and to use them in their independent play. The foundations were laid for the development of powerful, inner motivations for them to want to retrieve the experience they enjoyed so much for themselves. As they began to generate an intrinsic need to gain control over their favourite stories for themselves, they moved into a state of disequilibrium with this aspect of their environment.

The experience of being read a great variety of stories at this stage of their reading development supplied them with the means of achieving equilibrium once again with respect to their books. As they listened to these stories, many of them read repeatedly and comprising highly predictable language, they were provided with the opportunity to begin to use their remarkable language learning capacities. Their ability to begin to absorb the patterns of language, in this case written language, as found by Stross (1978), and their aptitude for internalizing story schema, as found by Applebee (1979), furnished the basis for their being able to begin to satisfy the next felt need in the hierarchy, that of gaining control over the oral dimensions of written language.

2. Control over the oral dimensions of written language. Children learn to control the syntactic, semantic and intonation dimensions of oral language through constantly hearing it and using it, usually in highly contextualized settings. They have the support of the situation, of the 'body' language being used by the person with whom they are talking, and they obtain immediate feedback from that person which tells them whether their attempts are being understood or not. If they are going to learn to read with any degree of fluency, and understanding, children have to learn to control these same syntactic, semantic and intonation dimensions of written language. They have to also learn to understand written language without reference to an immediately visible situation and the check on their understanding has got to come from within themselves, rather than from some external source.

Since written language cannot rely on the situation to provide support for its meaning (except in the case of environmental language) nor can its meaning be conveyed by gesture, pause or facial expression, it has to be recorded in such a way that it is able to carry all its meaning. For these reasons then at least, written language is usually very much more complex in its structures and idioms than the language of conversation. In order to be able to understand their stories however, children have to learn to deal with these complex structures and idioms. Although the pictures in their books provide them with some situational support, pictures cannot supply everything and much of the meaning still has to come from within themselves as they listen to their stories.

In order to develop this control over the patterns of written language and the related schema of their stories, these children embarked intuitively (with some assistance from their parents) to learn to retrieve their stories for themselves. They asked for, and in the case of two of the children at least, usually obtained, certain stories to be read repeatedly. Through their own silent rehearsal, their parents' use of the oral cloze-like strategy of 'completion' reading, and the appropriate use of their personally created strategies of 'mumble,' 'cooperative,' and 'echo' reading, they began to reproduce these stories at their own verbal, rather than at a textual level of accuracy. Just as in oral language learning they used approximating strategies and they would frequently reconstruct a story using their own level of control of the syntax. Throughout this process they endeavoured to maintain grammatical agreement with the original ("Den he feeled better") and the major elements of the story schema.

In the process of gaining control over a more accurate reproduction of their stories, they gradually learned to use the great range of written language structures employed in their stories and unusual literary idioms frequently found in stories ("That very night", "Be still", "He made mischief"). As they were able to reproduce the written dialect with greater fluency and expression, they were able to use this much more complicated form of language to "learn how to mean" and to construct meaning in context free situations. Their feeling for the syntactic and semantic cohesion of written language was developing. This was of course aided through their exceptional ability to internalize their control over the intonation patterns of written language and to use these in order to express the meaning of their stories more dramatically.

Throughout the whole process, the children could be seen directing and regulating their own learning. By the way in which they almost invariably self-corrected any "miscues" they made that did not make sense or did not sound like language, they were demonstrating how their central concern was with meaning and that they were constantly monitoring their own efforts to produce it. By their ability to make appropriate substitutions "on the run" and to produce language that was intonationally alive with great fluency, they were indicating how well they could use the strategy of prediction. Their future development as fluent, expressive readers, who would demand meaning consistently as they read, was being established during the second stage of this developmental reading hierarchy.

As they were engaged in the process of gaining control over the patterns of written language and its accompanying story schema, they were also in the process of laying the foundation for their move to the third level of the hierarchy of reading needs. Through the pointing-to-print behaviours of their parents as they read to them, through featured print in their books, through their experience with the various dimensions of environmental language and learning to write, and through their own growing curiosity about the print in their books, the children were gradually becoming increasingly aware of the print on the pages of their stories and its relationship to reading.

Much of the children's awareness of print during this second stage of their reading development seemed to be of a transparent or out-of-awareness kind, since they were generally convinced that they did not need to see the print in order to reproduce their stories. Two, for example, were confident that they could read with their eyes closed and that all they had to do in order to learn to read their stories was to listen and follow along as they were read to them. Despite this lack of conscious awareness of print however, all the children were seen to be making remarkable progress in developing control over the conventions and concepts which govern the recording of written language. Directionality and word-space-word matching principles were becoming evident in both their reading-like behaviour and in their writing and the foundations were being laid for a move to the third level of reading development where they would strive to gain control over the visual dimensions of written language.

For one of the children in particular, the awareness that her stories were preserved in print, and that to read them in the true sense she had to find ways of mastering this, was becoming a reality. The fact that she had entered the second period of disequilibrium was evidenced by her stated desire to be able to read a story without it first being read to her. It was also seen in her growing conviction that in order to read, it was necessary to look at the words, and most importantly, in her growing dissatisfaction with her present method of retrieving her stories without reference to the print.

3. Control over the visual dimension of print. Efficient readers consistently use, according to psycholinguistic theory, two main sources of information as they read: non-visual information consisting of their knowledge of the syntactic, semantic and intonation systems of written and oral language; and visual information consisting of

their knowledge of the graphophonic system of the language. Through their experience with gaining control over the oral dimensions of written language at the second stage of the hierarchy, these children were developing an extensive set of strategies to utilize their non-visual sources of information as they engaged in the process of retrieving their stories for themselves. By mastering the range of ways written language could be used to convey meaning, they would now be able to concentrate their attention on learning how the language was put together in a visual sense. The indication that they were prepared to begin to learn to use the visual sources of information for the purpose of reading their stories, was signified by their movement from fluent reading-like behaviour to the arhythmical or voice pointing type. Only one of the children had clearly entered this stage during the course of the study.

It was Gillian who moved to the third stage of the hierarchy and indicated that learning to read by using the visual information on the page was too difficult for her (because of her thinking that she had to remember what every word looked like). The powerful attitudes she had developed at the first stage of the hierarchy however, and the efficient syntactic, semantic and intonation strategies she had established at level two of the hierarchy, kept her at the task and allowed her to be constantly successful.

She was able to use her non-visual sources of information to predict what was on the page and to begin to learn to confirm her predictions by using her developing knowledge of sound-to-letter relationships.

By finally mastering exact matching, even when the line of print had multisyllabic words in it, Gillian was able to engage in the process of constantly seeing what she was saying. By being able to inspect print at the word, syllable and letter level she was able to use the principle which Clay (1975) and Smith (1979) see as so important to develop knowledge of this visual information, that of going from the known sound of the word to its representation in print.

As well as developing her knowledge of the rule system which governs the sound-to-spelling relationship in the language, Gillian was also building a sophisticated level of control over the eye movements necessary for fluent reading. It would appear that she had already begun to develop her ability to keep her eyes ahead of her voice as she read orally, thereby ensuring the possibility of reading fluently.

It was clear also that Gillian was using her well developed feeling for the syntactic and semantic cohesion of written language, since she would engage in the use of rerun strategies when she reached a word or part of the story she was reading, that she could not reproduce in any other way. As well as this, she would use the principle of selecting the most appropriate cueing system by switching to and from fluent and arhythmic reading.

Although Gillian still had some way to go to achieve absolute independence in her reading, it was clear that as she continued to add to her already reasonably developed knowledge of phonics, and to use this along with her knowledge of the orthographic information and her superb control over the non-visual cueing system, it would not be long before her stories would be accessible to her without any assistance. The energy, persistence and initiative that she was able to bring to the task were a product of the way in which her earlier developmental reading needs had been satisfied during her time spent in the previous two stages of the hierarchy.

It is hypothesized that as Gillian developed control over the visual dimensions of written language which would tend to cause her to read arhythmically, she would enter the third stage of disequilibrium where she would be seeking to regain her earlier fluency in reproducing her stories. She would then proceed to integrate the use of her visual and non-visual strategies to gain the desired fluency.

4. The remaining levels of the developmental hierarchy of reading needs. Although the following is mere speculation and is based on the possible experiences of children who learn to read without instruction, it would seem that the fourth level in the hierarchy of developmental reading needs could well be a stage where the readers aim to regain the fluency they possessed when they were retrieving their stories through reading-like behaviour during the second stage of their reading development. The fluency however, at this fourth level would be the outcome of their successful orchestration of both the non-visual and the visual sources of information used while reading.

In order to achieve the desired level of fluency the children would need to read widely, almost anything that they could lay their hands on. It is the stage where they would want to reinforce, through practice, their sophisticated range of strategies, to the point where they could read anything and everything that is within their cognitive and experiential range. The period of disequilibrium at the end of this stage would be an outcome of their growing dissatisfaction with the relatively simple and somewhat unrelated nature of the narrative material they are reading and an increasing need to study certain areas intensively.

The fifth level may well be a level of specialization in their reading, where they begin to gain in-depth experience with different themes or to explore different literary genres. They would need to gain increasing experience with expository material, which would bring a new series of challenges in terms of building controls over a different range of writing patterns and schemata. The final period of disequilibrium would occur as they begin to establish a need to incorporate fully their well-developed literary skills into their personally chosen life styles.

The sixth and final level may be similar to Maslow's highest stage of development; that of becoming a fully self-actualized person. In the developmental reading hierarchy it means that the individual is willing, able to, and wishes to use reading for all the necessary and desirable purposes of life. As a fully self-actualized reader this person uses reading to gain knowledge of the world, to contribute to how he or she functions as an individual within that world, to solve problems which occur, and as a rich source of leisure-time activity.

By being able to move through these developmental stages at the optimum time and to achieve fulfillment at each one of them, may well place reading where it ought to be for every one—in a position where it is able to serve their communicative developmental needs in the real sense of the word.

The Relevance to Psycholinguistic Theory. The results of this study provided considerable support for the theoretical position of the psycholinguists with regard to the way in which reading is learned. The principles usually espoused by such researchers as Goodman (1980), Holdaway (1979), Smith (1979) and Goodman and Goodman (1977) were seen to be operating to a greater or lesser extent in the way in which these children were going about the task of learning to read.

In their development and use of reading-like behaviour these children demonstrated their ability to use a range of very efficient psycholinguistically based strategies for learning to read. They could be seen making consistent use of the syntactic, semantic and intonation cueing systems. Ultimately they began to attend to, on a selective, predicting-confirming basis, some of the visual information on the page in the form of graphophonic cues. By having repeated access to large chunks of language being used in a great variety of ways they were provided with the opportunity to learn to use the complex patterns of written language in ways that would not be possible through ordinary conversation. Access to their accurately retrieved stories provided an opportunity, as Gardner (1970) suggested, to inspect the visual form of written language and so become increasingly familiar with its features.

Learning to read for these children then, was seen to be functioning as a genuine language learning activity, requiring their parents to act as facilitators rather than as instructors. By providing their children with an environment where written language was constantly being used in meaningful ways, the parents were supplying their children with the opportunity to begin to learn to use this form of language for themselves.

General Implications for Research. An implication arising from the results of this study for those researchers who wish to study the process of how children learn to read during the initial stage is that they should consider shifting some of their attention, as Torrey (1979) suggests, from the instructional setting of the school to the more naturalistic setting of the home. If they are to examine its further aspects of growth, it is essential that they conduct their research in classrooms where developmental literacy learning predominates. This is learning which occurs as Holdaway (1979) observes, "with a minimum of instruction as a 'natural' part of ordinary development" (p. 14).

It is important then, that increasing numbers of researchers who are interested in studying the process of reading as it develops from its earliest stages, follow the example of the linguists in their study of oral language learning. They should go into book-oriented homes of preschool children and observe, interact and record what is happening in the children's progress in becoming readers. But as well as observing children interacting with written language in book experience situations, they should also be following the lead provided by such researchers as Bissex (1979), Goodman, Y. (1980), Chomsky (1973), Clay (1977) and Rhodes (1979) and examine the interrelationships between learning to read and write and the influence of children's exposure to and use of the various dimensions of environmental written language on learning to read.

Specific Implications for Research. Although reference has already been made to implications for children's reading development, of attitudes, reading-like behaviour, and linguistic awareness, the results obtained from this study demonstrated the importance of these factors and their relationship to learning to read. Specific implications have therefore been drawn for these three factors.

1. The development of attitudes and learning to read. The importance of the development of positive attitudes towards books and reading in children in their progress in learning to read has always been acknowledged in a general sense by those interested in the field of reading. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, the role of attitudes in learning to read has not received a great deal of attention

from researchers. Attitude change and development has been seen to be slow in occurring, difficult to specify and hard to measure. The absence of studies conducted in attitude development and reading is particularly true of the preschool period of children's growth. This was reflected by the fact that Anderson and Filler (1976) in their recent book, Attitudes and Reading, made no reference to the relevance and importance of the preschool years in this aspect of children's development in relation to learning to read.

The results obtained in the study being reported here, however, demonstrated very clearly the centrality of the role of the children's attitudes towards books and reading in their reading development. Their intensely powerful attitudes were seen to have their origins in the secure, pleasurable and repeated experience of being read to by the parents, three of whom could clearly recall their own enjoyment at being read to as children.

But as well as the establishment of positive attitudes towards books and reading having a significant influence on their future development as readers, it may also be that there is an optimum time for these attitudes to be developed. This could be during their first few years of life. Certainly Cebuliak's (1977) study of avid readers would support this possibility as would the fact that two of the children involved in the study under discussion here could be described as being "book hungry" by three years of age. By developing their extremely powerful attitudes towards books very early in their lives, these two were left free to concentrate their attention on learning to retrieve their stories for themselves through reading-like behaviour. As in Maslow's theory their early fulfillment of certain basic needs during a particular period of growth laid the foundation for future development. They not only fulfilled a particular need, but were also released from having to concentrate their attention on obtaining further experiences that provided for the optimum level of satisfaction for that need.

The implications for researchers then are clear. Not only should they be examining the establishment of attitudes towards reading and their relationship and contribution to children's development as readers, but they should also be considering the possibility that there may be an optimum period for these attitudes to be established. The optimum period may well be during the child's first few years of life.

2. Reading-like behaviour. The results of this study provide a clear indication of the vitally important role that reading-like behaviour can play in the process of learning to read and this has implications for any

study of the early development of reading behaviour. The repeated "reading" of favourite stories provided an excellent example of White's (1959) "competence motivation" operating and of Elkind's (1967) observation of repetitive behaviour in children being a demonstration of "an emerging cognitive ability and the need to realize that ability through action" (p. 543). Cazden (1973) witnessed similar repetitive activity in children's oral language development.

Reading-like behaviour as it occurred in the children in this study provided valuable insights into the processes by which young children can orchestrate and manage the task of learning to read. Torrey (1979), in studying children who learned to read early, observed that the outstanding feature of their approach to learning to read was that they were seen to take the initiative for their learning. The children in this study, through their development and use of reading-like behaviour to retrieve their favourite stories for themselves, displayed this characteristic on many occasions. Researchers who are engaged in the process of examining the reading development of young children then, should be aware of the significant role that reading-like behaviour may play in this development when the conditions necessary for its appearance are present in the experiences of the children.

3. Studies in linguistic awareness. As could be expected, since reading was found to be a primary language learning activity, it was also found that, just as in oral language learning, the children did not have to be linguistically aware at the conscious, analytical level of what it was they were learning. They were however, just as Ehri (1975), Francis (1973) and Smith (1978) indicated, becoming increasingly linguistically aware as a result of the progress they were making in learning to read. The more skillful they became, for example, at retrieving their stories through reading-like behaviour as a result of learning that was occurring at Cazden's (1975) out-of-awareness level, the more aware they became of the presence of print on the page and of their need to attend to it in order to learn to read in the true sense of the word. Other sources of learning such as environmental language and their experiences with learning to write were also seen to be contributing to their growing understanding of written language from both a "function and form" point of view.

The implications for those researchers who wish to examine the relationship and/or the development of linguistic awareness and learning to read are clear. As well as continuing to research this topic in classroom settings where the nature of the instruction in reading being given to the children frequently demands that they become consciously linguistically aware of what they are being expected to learn, the investigations should also be conducted in settings where the children are learning to read naturally. In these settings, no explicit demands are made to make their understanding of what they are learning "opaque" and so the development of their linguistic awareness should be able to be observed occurring in its true relationship to learning to read. Studies which are conducted to determine the nature of the relationship between linguistic awareness and learning to read should give careful consideration to the nature of the reading programme which is being provided for the children's learning.

Implications for Parents and Their Children

The implications arising from the results of this study for the nature and extent of the book experience that parents should provide for their children in the home are numerous. Reading to children has traditionally been seen as "a good thing" to do generally, with little understanding by parents and others of its full potential in contributing to children's reading development. This study has demonstrated however, that it is important for parents to know not only why they should read to their children, but how they might better go about the task to enhance the quality and value of the experience for both themselves and their children. What they read, the conditions under which the reading occurs, and their reactions to the participatory activities in the reading of their children were all seen to have implications for the contribution the experience was able to make to their reading development. The implication for parents and their children are discussed under the headings of: providing a book oriented environment; reading to and with your children; reading-like behaviour; environmental language, and; writing.

Providing a Book Oriented Environment. The evidence obtained from this study indicated clearly, that in order for children to begin to learn to read from their experiences with books, the richer their book oriented environment was, the more experience they obtained. The provision of a home library, the entry of books into the home from an outside library, the regular supply of children's magazines and the opportunity to use long playing records with accompanying books, were all seen as significant factors in the frequency and duration of their experience with printed materials of various kinds.

In order to provide children with a range of story schema and patterns of written language so that they obtain the opportunity to become familiar with these features of books, a variety of stories should be read to them. Of particular value to preschool children are books containing language of a predictable kind, with repetitive, cumulative and rhyming patterns. Parents need to be made aware of a range of criteria by which they can identify good quality books appropriate to the age level of their children. Recommended book lists should be made available to parents of preschool children. Government health services who provide potential parents with valuable sources of information concerning the physical care of their children, should also provide them with information concerning their "intellectual care." One of the facets of this care should be the provision of lists of books suitable for reading to their children and a booklet containing suggestions as to why and how they should read to their children. The policy of the government of Finland, one of the few countries in the world where universal literacy has been achieved, could well be followed. During the International Year of the Child (1979) this government gave a book to every mother of a child born in that country during that year. This book contained a variety of stories, folk tales, nursery rhymes and jingles, along with information as to why it was important to read to their children and how they might do this more effectively.

Books should be stored where they are readily accessible to the children and their parents and there should always be a ready supply of these in the main family living area since their presence makes it more likely that impromptu reading to and by the children will occur. Care should be taken to develop a sense of ownership of books in the children and they should also witness parents engaged in the process of reading their own materials for various purposes. It would probably serve a useful function if the parents commented incidentally from time to time on the purpose for their reading.

Reading To and With Your Children. Since learning to read was seen to be a genuine language learning process which commenced with frequent immersion and exposure in the process being used, it was evident that children should be read to as early in their lives as possible. And just as the setting in which oral language is learned is non-instructional and is usually conducted in an atmosphere of warm, human sharing, so too should the children's reading experiences be obtained in this way. The enjoyment of the parents in the activity should be clearly evident to the children.

Although no effort should be made to make the children consciously aware of the processes and concepts involved in reading, the parents should attempt to hold the book they are reading in such a way that the children can see the print and the pictures. It is also important that parents have one hand free as they read, so they may point occasionally to the print, indicating directionality, matching word-space-word, or any special features of the print. Such activities, of course, must be appropriate and add to rather than detract from the enjoyment of the experience. The expressive quality of the parents' reading should be such that the children are able to experience, through their developing imaginations, the full range of emotions intended by the author.

Book selection for story reading should be a shared responsibility once the children are old enough to indicate their choices. Favourite stories should be selected for repeated reading, but new stories should be introduced regularly also, in order that some of them may become favourites. Care must be taken to see that an older sibling who is present in the story reading does not restrict or interfere with any spontaneous participatory activity in which the younger sibling begins to engage. If possible, each child should be read to on their own from time to time in order that each of them may participate freely in the shared nature of the experience without interference.

During any story reading activity, and particularly when a favourite story is being reread, the children's participation in the reading should be invited and encouraged but never demanded. Questions should be asked sparingly about the pictures, plot and characters and should be of the predictive (What do you think is going to happen next?) and inferential (Why do you think that happened?) kind in the main. The children should be encouraged to ask questions to clarify words and actions that they do not understand and these should be answered as simply as possible. The explanation should relate back to something in the children's previous experience whenever possible. Titles, author's names and illustrator's names should be referred to incidentally occasionally, from a functional point of view, and the children should hear, and be encouraged to use, terms such as "letters," "word," "page," "cover," "book" and the like in their conversations.

As well as participating occasionally through questions and discussions concerning the features of books, the children should also be encouraged, but never directed, to share in the reading of the story. By pausing at highly predictable points in favourite story as they are reading, parents are able to invite their children to participate in the reading. It may be necessary also, for the parents to adjust their rate of reading to approximate their children's rate of production of oral language in order to enhance the possibility of participation occurring.

Rather than viewing the experience of reading-like behaviour in their children as "cute" or as something that is "aggravating", parents need to understand the importance of the behaviour in their children's reading development. Just as they encourage their children in non-corrective ways to experiment and approximate in their production of oral language, and allow them to create their own strategies for this vitally important learning process, so too, parents have to be led to understand that the same processes have to be given the opportunity to develop in their children's attempts to reproduce their stories for themselves. The strategies of completion, mumble, co-operative and echo reading have all got to be given the opportunity to emerge in natural ways and the characteristic fluent and arhythmic forms of reading-like behaviour should be seen as an integral part of the developing process of learning to read. The children's attempt to retrieve their stories in this manner should always be met with enthusiasm and praise on the part of the parents and the children should be encouraged to engage in independent reading-like behaviour as often as they wish. Just as Huey (1908) pointed out over seventy years ago, that "the secret of it all lay in reading to and with your children", parents today have to be assisted to understand that the most important factor in their children's development as readers is not the reading instruction they receive in school, but the nature and extent of the book experiences they are able to share in before they go to school.

Environmental Language. Even though, examining the children's knowledge and use of environmental language and its relationship to learning to read was only a minor part of this study, it was evident that, in its highly functional form, this type of written language provided a powerful source which children are able to learn to use with relative ease. Parents should be made aware of its use in developing their children's understanding of the function and the form of written language and should be constantly alert to ways of having their children learn to recognize and use it. Food and drink labels in the home and supermarket, advertising on television and in newspapers and magazines, fast food outlet signs and instructions for games and puzzles in children's magazines can all be used to extend children's ability to develop their awareness of written language.

Writing. Again, although the examination of the children's writing development was only a minor part of this study, the way in which it was being learned was seen to follow similar principles to those used in learning to speak and read. It became apparent from the results of this study that if preschool children are going to experiment with producing written language they have to see this form of language being used functionally, they should be provided with the necessary materials to practice, and they should be encouraged to experiment and approximate in their efforts to learn to communicate in this way. Parents should provide them with meaningful opportunities to learn to write their own name, involve them in letter and card writing to friends and relations and should draw their attention to the use that is made of writing in the home when messages are left for members of the family, grocery lists are made up and letters are written. The parents need to understand that the same non-corrective principles should be adhered to with regard to the child's own invented spelling and standards of legibility, and their efforts should meet with constant encouragement, pleasure and assistance, when sought.

Implications for Teachers

This study was not directed at examining how children learn to read in school. Since its results provided insights however, as to how preschool children can and do go about the task of learning to read as an outcome of their shared book experiences in particular, some implications emerge for teachers. These have been discussed under the headings of: shared book experience; linguistic awareness; sensitive observation of reading behaviour, and; predictable reading materials.

Shared Book Experience. The commonly held assumption that learning to read starts after a child has entered school and has experienced some form of "reading readiness" programme can begin to be questioned as a result of this study. Rather than tending to exclude the home from their considerations in planning their reading development programmes, teachers should recognize the vital importance of children's preschool experiences with books, environmental language and learning to write. They should seek ways of involving parents of preschool children in learning how they might engage their children in enjoyable and meaningful experiences with written language in naturalistic ways similar to those experiences they provide for oral language learning. One of the most important elements of this preschool involvement that teachers should discuss with these parents is the provision of regular shared book experiences for their children in the home and the principles which should govern these.

Again, if, as the results of this study tended to show, young children can begin to develop and direct their own learning to read strategies from very early in their lives as a result primarily of their shared book experiences, teachers should begin to examine the assumptions inherent in a number of current "reading readiness" programmes used in schools. Since most of these programmes place more emphasis on children doing work book exercises than on providing them with an extensive, varied and repeated book experiences with trade picture story books, teachers should begin to consider the value of shifting the emphasis to the latter in these "readiness" programmes. By so doing they may find that their role as teacher could change from that of an instructor who tends to regulate and control the children's learning,to that of a facilitator who provides the children with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. It would appear that teachers in the early grades might explore with some profit, ways of incorporating into their reading programmes the main features of the home bedtime story, which provided the children involved in this study, with the opportunity to begin to learn to read through their own self-directed efforts.

Linguistic Awareness. The results obtained from this study have demonstrated that the children involved in it had developed and were continuing to develop, a great deal of understanding and skill in utilizing the processes and terminology involved in learning to read. No one had to explain to them the principles of directionality or how to incorporate the patterns of written language or story schema into their repertoire of linguistic competencies. Nor did they have to be made consciously aware of the strategies to use to learn to retrieve their favourite stories for themselves through reading-like behaviour. It was not necessary to make explicit their need to concentrate on reproducing meaning by using their syntactic, semantic and intonation strengths, rather than by concentrating on the visual information on the page, as they engaged in the process of "reading"these stories. It could be seen that the children involved in this study were actively engaged in developing their understanding of the concepts and processes surrounding learning to use written language through a variety of experiences with this form of language.

Virtually all of the learning that has just been described (and a great deal more) was occurring in a "transparent" or "out-of-awareness state, just as Cazden (1975) suggested for oral language learning. Although the children could bring some of their knowledge to a level of conscious awareness when asked relevant questions, it was clear that much of what they knew and understood about the concepts and processes involved was still being clarified and developed. Any attempt to aid this process through direct explanation or even demonstration, as was seen in the "reading with your eyes closed" sequence, was to risk confusing the children and devaluing the activity that they had found so profitable to retrieve their stories for themselves. It was entirely possible that one girl's view of the process of reading requiring the visual remembering of all the words, may have been an outcome of all the questioning she had received related to being able to read with her eyes closed and the need to be able to see all the words to be able to read. It was significant perhaps that, although she began to try and learn to remember what all the words in some of her stories looked like, when she actively engaged in the process of retrieving a story for herself, she instinctively and selectively utilized the highly efficient language learning strategies she had been developing through her years of experience with her books.

Since the children involved in this study demonstrated that they were able to make progress in learning to read without being linguistically aware at the conscious level of what they were learning, the implications for teachers are clear. Rather than attempting to have young children understand what they are learning in reading at the explicit level and verbalize the concepts involved in the process, they should be providing them with many and varied activities involving reading and other forms of written language in order that they might develop their understanding of the processes and concepts through these multidimensional experiences. Teachers should become aware of the dangers involved in distorting the children's understanding of the concepts and processes involved by attempting to have them bring their understanding to a level of conscious awareness.

Sensitive Observation of Reading Behaviour. It is unfortunate, as Nurss (1979) points out, that the current crop of so-called "reading readiness" tests do not provide teachers with the kind of information they need in order to obtain an accurate assessment of their students' reading development and needs. Their subtest items frequently bear little or no relationship to the process of reading as evidenced by their limited predictive qualities, and the group nature of the tests restricts sensitive observation on the part of the teacher of each child's ability to perform the

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required tasks.

The results of this study demonstrated that the way to examine the progress children are making in learning to read is to observe sensitively, their actual behaviour as they interact with books from time to time and then to compare these observations and record the nature of any development. By this means a subjective assessment can be made for example, of the quality of their interest in and their attitudes towards books and their attention spans when they are being read to or when they are with books independently. Both of these factors were seen to be powerful indicators of the children's development as readers, and yet neither or these aspects of their behaviour with books are usually considered in any "readiness" test.

The Reading Concepts Observational Scale used throughout this study which encouraged the children to participate in various ways in the reading of a story, proved to be valuable instrument for examining the progress the children were making in several areas of their reading development. Their book handling knowledge, their understanding of the concepts related to reading (e.g. letter, word, book, page), their mastery of specific directionality and word-space-word matching skills and understandings, their ability to recognize non-standard print forms as such, and a range of other understandings of books, reading and written language were all able to be examined at intervals. All of these tasks can be seen to be directly related to learning to read in some way. They provide valuable indirect information as to the extent of the children's book experience in their homes and their potential to handle reading and reading-like tasks in school.

The benefit to be derived from teachers maintaining regular and systematic observation of the various aspects of their students' reading development are clear. Not only would they be able to arrive at a comprehensive and specific view of the progress their students were making in learning to read, but through engaging in the process of careful observation and subsequent interpretation, they would be able to expand their understanding of how reading is learned by their students.

Materials for Learning to Read. An outstanding feature of the children's behaviour throughout this study was that they were drawn back to their favourite books again and again. One particular story, for example, was read and reread to and with one of the children literally hundreds of times. An examination of these stories usually revealed that the language in them was almost invariably rich and memorable. It was also frequently, beautifully rhythmical and sometimes rhyming. Often they were made even more predictable by the incorporation of repetitive and/or cumulative patterns of phrases, sentences and sometimes whole paragraphs. Few restrictions were placed on the vocabulary used and it seemed that the authors placed no barriers on the range of written language structures they used. The quality of the illustrations used in many of these books, was usually exemplary and they were almost invariably clearly supportive of the text of the story.

As well as containing rich and lyrical language of high quality, these stories also presented the children with a variety of story schema. Their settings, range of episodic structures, various developments and resolutions, when coupled with the quality of the language that was being used in them, were able to take the children through all kinds of imaginative experiences which they frequently wanted to relive again and again by returning once more to the story.

The implications for teachers are quite clear. If they want their young students to want to learn to read by reading they should supply them with stories that are meaningful and memorable in terms of their language and story schema. In the early stages, the quality of predictableness should be clearly evident in the rhythmic and rhyming features of the language, while repetitive and cumulative patterns should be present in some of the stories. Opportunity should be given for the children to hear these stories, and some that they choose as favourites, again and again.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study was exploratory in the sense that an attempt was made to obtain data which would enable the investigator to describe how preschool children engaged in the process of learning to read without receiving any formal instruction. Except from the results of retrospective studies of early readers and the occasional case study conducted by some parents, little is known about the way preschool children start to learn to read in the naturalistic setting of the home. The type of study conducted demonstrated that there is considerable scope for the development of this line of inquiry and the results obtained suggest numerous directions for further study. Some of the directions recommended are presented below.

1. This study used as its subjects, children whose parents were all above average in their level of education and socio-economic class. There is need for a similar study to be conducted using children whose parents could be classified as being average and below average in both education and socio-economic class, but who read to their children regularly.
2. The children involved in this study were from 2 years 11 months to 5 years 4 months at the beginning of the data collecting process. There is an urgent need for further similar studies to be conducted, not only with children

in this age group, but also using children from the time they are born to three years of age. Ideally, longitudinal observational studies should be conducted with children from the time they are read to soon after birth, until they become independent readers.

3. In this study, little or no attempt was made to control the type of material that was read to the children. Studies similar in design to this one should be conducted, but with the children being read a much wider selection of highly predictable (Rhodes, 1981) books to see if this type of material facilitates the more rapid development of reading-like behaviour in the children and their subsequent growth to independence in reading.
4. There was consistent evidence obtained during this study of the dominant and restrictive actions of the older sibling in the shared book experiences in the home. Further studies should be conducted to investigate if this behaviour is characteristic of this family pattern and if so what are its short term and long term effects on the reading development of the younger sibling.
5. The development of linguistic or metalinguistic awareness in the children was seen in this study to be much more an outcome of the children's progress in learning to read, rather than a prerequisite for their learning to read. Studies need to be conducted which would

examine not only the nature and extent of linguistic awareness and its relationship to learning to read but a study should also be conducted to examine the nature and extent of the demands different reading programmes currently being used in schools make on their students needing to become linguistically aware in order to learn to read through any of these programmes.

6. All the children involved in this study were part of two-children families. There is a need to conduct studies involving the effect different numbers have on the nature and extent of the story reading which occurs in the home and on the type of participation which occurs in the shared reading experiences in these different family settings.
7. Although this study was not concerned with learning to read in school, the results obtained from it have implications for the types of programmes which could be implemented in the school setting. There is an urgent need for home-based, bedtime story situation to be replicated in the classroom through the use of enlarged books (Holdaway, 1979) and other supporting materials and for the effects of this type of programme on the children's reading development to be carefully evaluated.
8. The psycholinguistically based principles which were seen to be governing the progress the children involved

in this study were making in learning to read, appeared to be applicable for use with students experiencing difficulty in learning to read. Students in this category need to be identified and provided with the opportunity to learn to read through a programme which incorporates the use of these principles. Studies need to be conducted to determine the effects of this type of programme on the progress these students are able to make in learning to read and on the kinds of strategies they employ to do so.

9. The Reading Concepts Observational Scale used throughout this study proved to be a valuable instrument to obtain information concerning the reading development and progress of the children. The value of this instrument, or others similar to it, in assisting teachers in obtaining similar information on their students' reading development so that they may provide a programme suited to their needs, should be investigated.

10. The hierarchy of developmental reading needs as proposed from the results obtained in this study, requires extensive investigation. The development and influence of children's attitudes towards books and reading, the growth, features and role of reading-like behaviour, and the whole process of learning to read from the developmental perspective needs careful examination, using observational techniques similar to those used in this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FAMILY READING QUESTIONNAIRE

FAMILY READING QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: ______________________ Date of Interview: __________

FAMILY BACKGROUND

	Father	Mother
Birthplace:		
High school graduate:		
University graduate:		
Reading history:		
Read to as a child?		
How frequently?		
Favourite books?		
Memories of learning to read:		
Easy?		
Difficult?		
Learned before school?		
Learned at school?		
Reading habits now:		
Frequency?		
Type?		
Time of day?		

What does ...... do when you read to yourself?

HOME

Siblings

Brother(s): Sister(s):

Ages: Ages:

Other adults in the home:

Language in the home:

THE CHILD

History

Birthplace: Birth date:

At what age did ...... begin to walk?

At what age did ...... begin to talk?

Has ...... had any serious illnesses?

Has ...... had any problems with his/her vision?

Has ...... had any problems with his/her hearing?

How manu times has ...... shifted house since birth?

Play behaviour

What kind of activities does ...... engage in?

When there is no one to play with what does ...... usually do?

When there are other children around what does ...... usually do?

Does ...... appear to prefer children's or adults' company?

Television

Does ...... watch television?

Is there any control of ...... viewing?

What programmes does ...... watch most frequently?

Do you watch any programmes with ......?

If so, which ones?

Does ...... show any particular interest in any commercials?

Does ......memorize any commercials?

Does ...... watch any educational (Sesame St., Electric Co.) programmes?

Does ...... appear to learn any words related to her/his TV viewing?

Does ...... appear to learn anything about reading and written language from watching these programmes?

Are there any indications that TV viewing stimulates ...... interest in reading?

Any other comments concerning television and reading?

Play with books

When ...... plays with others (siblings or friends) do books ever enter their play? If so, how?

If ...... ever uses books when she/he is playing alone how does she/he use them?

Does ...... ever play school? If so, what form does this take?

How important a role do books play in ...... waking hours?

SCHOOL

Nursery school

Does (did, will) ...... go to nursery school?

Why do (did, will) you send ...... to nursery school?

Does ...... appear to learn anything about reading at school?

Kindergarten

(Same questions as above).

HOME ENVIRONMENT

Home-owned books

Approximately how many children's books do you have in your home?

What were the sources of these?

How many were obtained specifically for ......?

Does ...... have any particular place for her/his books?

How are books usually selected for ......?

Does ...... ever ask for a particular book? What action do you take?

Does ...... display any ownership characteristics with her/his books?

Library books

Do you belong to a library? Does it have a children's section?

Does ...... belong to a library?

How often do you visit the library for your own or for ...... purposes?

Does ...... go with you to the library? What does ...... do at the library?

How are ...... books selected?

Does ...... ever express a wish to go to the library?

Does ...... ever request that the same book be taken out? If so, why do you think ...... does that?

Does ...... have any other source of books?

READING

'Bedtime story' history

When did you start reading to ......?

Why did you start reading to ......?

Have you read as much to ...... as you did to any other children in the family? If not, why not?

What kind of stories did you start reading to ......?

What were ...... reactions to being read to in these early stages?

Can you outline your 'reading to' ...... behaviour since you first started doing this?

- Frequency?
- Time of day?
- Duration?
- Type of story read?
- Your attitude to the task?

What have been the characteristics of your story-reading behaviour?

Have you tried to involve ...... in the reading by:
- Asking questions?
- Pointing to illustrations?
- Pointing to words?
- Pausing to allow ...... to finish a part of the story?
- Encouraged and/or praised efforts to 'imitate' reading?

Do you always make sure that ...... is able to see what you are reading?

How often do you read to ...... now?

For what period each day?

What times during the day do you read to ......?

Does ...... ever ask you to read to her/him?

If you read to ...... at a regular time each day how is the book chosen?

Do you ever not read a story chosen by ...... to be read? If so, why do you read it? If not, why not?

Frequently read stories

Has (or does) ...... exhibit any preference for any books or stories? Which ones and why?

If ...... choses a story to be read over and over again what do you do?

Do you always try and read the story the same way? Why?

Does this liking for a particular book last long?

Does it happen often?

What does ...... do during these repeated readings?

Has ...... ever tried to memorize any of these repeatedly-read stories? When did this behaviour first appear?

How does ...... seem to go about doing this?

How successful is she/he?

Does ...... insist on an accurate reading?

Does ...... know when to turn the pages? How does she/he seem to know when to do this?

Does ...... join in the reading? How does she/he do this?

Does ...... appear to be trying to follow the print on the pages?

Reading-like behaviour

Does ...... ever try to imitate reading? When did this behaviour first appear?

With what story?

How often had the story been read?

Why do you think she/he memorizes stories?

How frequently does this occur?

If ...... engages in this reading-like behaviour does it always occur with a repeatedly-read story?

Is the story 'read' accurately?

If ...... miscues does she'he correct the miscue?

Does ...... read to herself/himself, to you, to anything or anybody else?

Does ...... say that she/he is reading?

Does ...... ever point to the words as she/he is reading? How accurately does she/he do this?

What does ...... seem to be looking at while 'reading'?

What are your reactions to this behaviour when it occurs?

LEARNING TO READ

Have you any recollection of learning to read?

Are you able to describe how you learned to read?

How do you think that children should learn to read?

When do you think children should learn to read?

Who do you think should teach children to read?

Have you ever done anything specially to teach ...... to read?

Should parents try to help their children to learn to read?

How might they do this?

Do you think that children could teach themselves to read?

How might they do this?

READING AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Has ...... ever asked you to indicate where you are reading?

Has ...... ever asked questions such as:
   What word says that?
   Where is that word?

Has ...... ever given any indication that she/he understands that what you are reading is actually printed on the page?

If so, when and how did this occur?

Has ...... ever indicated that she/he is able to recognize written language in the environment?
   Her/his own name or someone else's name?
   Food labels?
   Television programmes?
   Gas stations?
   Road signs or street signs?

Has ...... ever tried to write (print) any words or letters? If so, when did this behaviour occur and what form did it take?

What seemed to stimulate ...... attempts to write?

Have you done anything to encourage this behaviour?

PERSONALITY

How would you describe ...... personality?

Do you think that she/he learns easily? Has a good memory?

Would you describe her/him as an independent child?

APPENDIX B

READING CONCEPTS QUESTIONNAIRE

READING CONCEPTS QUESTIONNAIRE

General:

The interview should be conducted under conditions which are quiet and free from interruption. It should be conducted after the Reading Concepts Observational Scale has been administered. If that scale has not been used then this interview should be held only after the child and the interviewer have been together on at least one previous occasion. Due to the length of the questionnaire it may be neccessary to have a rest period at some stage during the interviewing session or to administer it over two sessions.

Specific:

1. The interview should be recorded on audio tape as well as by hand.
2. Each question serves as "an opener" and the interviewer is free to probe wherever he feels that it is necessary.
3. Materials that are required:
    a. Cassette tape recorder with a 60 minute tape.
    b. Cassette tape of a story being read.
    c. Folder of pictures for some of the questions.

Example: Book reading situation
Environmental language pictures.

READING CONCEPTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Show the child the picture of an adult reading to a child and play the tape of a story being read.

ASK:

1. What is this mother doing with her daughter? ____________________

If the child does not use the word "reading" in her response, take a book and begin reading it aloud.

ASK:

What am I doing with this book? ____________________

If the word "reading" is still not used then ask:

Am I reading it? ____________________

If the response is "yes" then return to the first question.
If the response is "no", continue with the questionnaire.

2. Does anyone in your family read to you? ____________________

3. Who reads to you? ____________________

4. When does your (mother) read to you? ____________________

If other members of the family read to the child repeat the question for them also.

5. How often does (mother) read to you? ____________________

(Insert whichever member of the family is applicable).

6. Hold up a copy of a story book. Ask:

What do we call this? ____________________

7. What is in a book?

8. Open the book and read the first few lines of the story.
Ask: How do I know what to say when I read this book?

9. As I read this story to you I have to turn over the pages (Demonstrate). Why do I do that?

10. How do I know when to turn over a page?

11. Where does this story come from that I am reading to you?

Probe if necessary with: Yes, it comes from a book, but how does it get into the book?

12. If by this stage of the interview the child has not used the word "word" in talking about "reading" books and stories ask:

When we read a story from a book what do we have to use to say the story out loud?

13. Do you like being read to?

14. What do you like about being read to?

If the child replies with, "Because it is nice", probe further with: Yes, but why is it nice?

15. If the answer is, "Look at the pictures" or "Look at the words" ask: Why do you look at the pictures (or words)?

16. When you are being read to by your (mother) do you ever turn the pages over for her?

If the answer is "yes", ask: How do you know when to turn the pages over?

17. Are you able to read yet?

If "yes", ask: What can you read?

Tell me what you do when you read?

How did you learn how to read?

Do you want to learn to read better than you are able to now?

If "yes", ask: Why do you want to learn to read better?

What do you think that you might have to do to read better than you are able to now?

If "no", ask: How do you know that you can't read yet?

What do you think that you have to learn to do to be able to read?

Do you want to learn how to read?

If "yes", ask: Why do you want to learn to read?

If "no", ask: Why don't you want to learn to read?

18. If you could read what would you like to read?

19. Does anyone have to help you to learn how to read?

20. Who do you think should help you learn to read?

21. How do you think that they should help you?

22. Do you think that you could learn to read by yourself?

If "yes", ask: How do you think that you might go about doing this?

____

If "no", ask: Why don't you think that you could learn to read by yourself?

____

23. Did you learn to talk by yourself?

____

If "yes", ask: If you learned to talk by yourself why can't you learn to read by yourself?

____

24. How old are you now?

____

25. Do you think that you will learn to read one day?

____

If "yes", ask: How old do you think you should be when you start learning to read?

____

Why do you think that you should learn to read?

____

26. Do you think that learning to read (or learning to read better) will be easy or hard?

____

27. Why do you think that learning to read will be easy? (or hard?)

____

28. Is it possible to read with your eyes closed?

____

If "yes", ask: Tell me how to do that?

____

If "no", ask: Why not?

____

29. Is it possible to read a book when the book is closed?

____

If "yes", ask: Tell me how to do that?

____

If "no", ask: Why not?

30. Does your father read?

If "yes", ask: What does he read?

31. Does your mother read?

If "yes", ask: What does she read?

32. Why do you think that they read?

33. When your mother or father read, do they read aloud or to themselves?

34. Except when we are reading to people do you think we should read aloud or to ourselves? (Probe with: Why?)

35. Apart from stories in books what other kinds of things can we read?

APPENDIX C

FAVOURITE BOOK QUESTIONNAIRE

FAVOURITE BOOK QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS: THE INTERVIEWER AND THE CHILD SHOULD HAVE MET ON SEVERAL PREVIOUS OCCASIONS BEFORE THIS INTERVIEW TAKES PLACE. THE INTERVIEW SHOULD BE CONDUCTED UNDER QUIET CONDITIONS, FREE FROM PARENTAL OR SIBLING INTERRUPTION. IF THE CHILD HAS HAD LITTLE EXPERIENCE WITH A CASSETTE TAPE RECORDER, SOME TIME SHOULD BE SPENT IN ALLOWING HIM TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ITS OPERATION AND FUNCTION.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. What is your favourite story (book)?
2. Why do you like that story?
3. Do you have any other favourite stories? What are their names?
4. Why do you like .....? (Name of whatever story(s) the child refers to)
5. I would like you to bring to me the story that you like and know best of all.
6. Are you able to read this story to me?

If the child states that he cannot read yet, ask him to tell you the story. Begin taping the child's reading or retelling. Do not offer any assistance unless it is requested and then prompt as little as possible.

OBSERVATION OF THE CHILD'S

READING/TELLING OF THE STORY

1. During the reading/telling, observe such things as:

   Coordination of page turning with the story.
   Any pointing activity.
   Eye movements. (Are they directed at the print? at the pictures? or at both?)

2. Subsequent analysis of the reading/telling of the story.

   The child's reading/telling of the story will be transcribed and any miscues will be analysed using a modified reading miscue inventory procedure. Questions to be answered will be as follows:

   a) Do the child's miscues (observed responses) retain the grammatical function of the expected response?

   b) Does the child self-correct any miscues?

(i) Are these corrections the results of deviations from the syntax of the expected response?

(ii) Are these corrections the result of deviations from the semantic flow of the story?

c) Are the observed responses grammatically acceptable?

d) Are the observed responses semantically acceptable?

e) Do the miscues result in any meaning change in the story?

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED AFTER

THE READING/TELLING OF THE STORY

BOOK TITLE

1. When you went and selected this book how did you recognize it from all the other books?

____

If the child indicates that the book was identified by the picture on the cover ask:

2. Is there any other way that we are able to tell this book from other ones?

____

Continue probing until the child either refers to the 'name of the story' or it can be presumed that he does not know that books have their title on their covers.

If the child does not know this take a piece of blank paper and cover everything except the title of the book on the cover.

Then ask:

3. Do you know what that is?

____

If the child knows that books have titles ask:

4. Show me the name (title) of this story (book).

____

5. What is the name of this story?

6. Can you read it to me?

7. Point to it as you read it.

If the child states that he cannot read it then say:

8. I will read it for you. You point to it as I read it.

9. See if you can find the name of your story somewhere else in your book.

10. Why do books have names (titles)?

BOOK AUTHOR

1. Do you know where the story that is in this book came from? (or) How did the story get into this book?

Continue to probe to see if the child knows that books are written by people and that their names are usually recorded on the cover and the front place. If the child demonstrates that he understands that books are written by people, ask:

2. Point to the name of the person who wrote your story.

3. Do you know his/her name?

4. Read it to me.

5. Are you able to find the writer's (author's) name anywhere else? Point to it and read it to me.

BOOK READING/TELLING

1. When you said your story to me were you reading the story

or telling the story?

2. How did you know what to say?

3. Show me where your story begins.

4. How do you know that it starts there?

Depending on how the child answered the first question say:

5. Read (or tell) me the story on this page.

6. Now point to the story as you read (or tell) it.

7. How did you know what to say?

If the child does not know that there are words on the page and that they can be read, ask:

8. Could I read the story on this page?

Probe the response to this question with "How?" if the child answers "yes" and with "Why not?" if the child says "no".

APPENDIX D

FAVOURITE STORY REREADING OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

FAVOURITE STORY REREADING OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

DIRECTIONS: THE OBSERVER SHOULD BE KNOWN TO BOTH CHILD AND PARENT. BEFORE THE READING COMMENCES THE PARENT WILL BE REQUESTED TO FOLLOW HIS/HER NORMAL PATTERN WHEN READING TO THE CHILD. THE CHILD WILL BE ASKED TO BRING ONE OF HIS FAVOURITE STORIES TO BE READ. THE OBSERVER WILL SIT IN A POSITION WHERE HE CAN SEE THE CHILD'S FACE AND EYES DURING THE READING. SOME OF THE ANSWERS WILL BE OBTAINED AS A RESULT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PARENT WHICH WILL BE CONDUCTED AFTER THE READING.

BOOK SELECTION

1. How was this particular book first selected for reading to the child?

2. For the subsequent, repeated readings, who selected the book?

3. How frequently has the story been read?

4. What other books are read repeatedly at the child's request?

5. What are the characteristics of the book(s) selected for repeated readings?

    Illustrations.
    Type of story - "here and now", "make-believe".
    Complexity of the language: syntax, vocabulary.
    Rhyming patterns.
    Characterization.
    Size of point.

THE PARENT'S READING

1. How is the story read to the child?

    a) Without interruption?
    b) With comments and elaboration?
    c) Style of reading: speed? fluency? expressiveness?

2. During the reading is the child encouraged to participate in the reading? How does this occur?

    a) By the parent pausing?
    b) By specific questions?
        What happened next?
        What is happening on this page?

3. During the reading does the parent do or say anything that would facilitate the development of the child's concepts about books, reading and print?

    a) Is there reference made to such things as the name of the story and/or author at the beginning and end of the story?
    b) Does the parent point to the lines of print that are being read indicating directionality?
    c) Does she point to specific words in relation to the action of the story? (e.g. "There's where it says ...")

d) Does the parent use any term related to reading? (e.g. word,letter, read, beginning of a word, "There's the word ...")

4. Does the parent allow the child to turn the pages of the book as the story is being read?

THE CHILD'S ACTIONS DURING THE READING

1. Where does the child sit during the reading? In a position where the pages of the book can be seen?

2. Does the child attempt to turn the pages of the book in time with the story? What cues appear to be used for this purpose?

3. What does the child look at during the reading? The picture? The print? Both?

4. Does the child ask any questions during the reading?
   e.g. "Where are you reading?"
   "What does that say?"
   "Where is the word that says ...?"

5. During the reading does the child make any obvious attempts to memorize the story by:
   a) "reading" along with the parent?
   b) repeating lines after they have been read?
   c) completing phrases or sentences?

6. During the reading, does the child "correct" the parent's reading?

7. Does the child voluntarily engage in retelling or "rereading" the story?

THE CHILD'S INDEPENDENT BOOK ACTIVITY

1. Does the child go to books of his own volition? What is the frequency of this behaviour?

2. Does the child select "favourite" books for any independent activity or does any book satisfy his purposes here?

3. Does the child demonstrate an interest in any other printed material? What are the characteristics of his behaviour with this "other" material?

4. What are the characteristics of the child's independent activity with books?

APPENDIX E

MOTHER AND JENNIFER GO SHOPPING

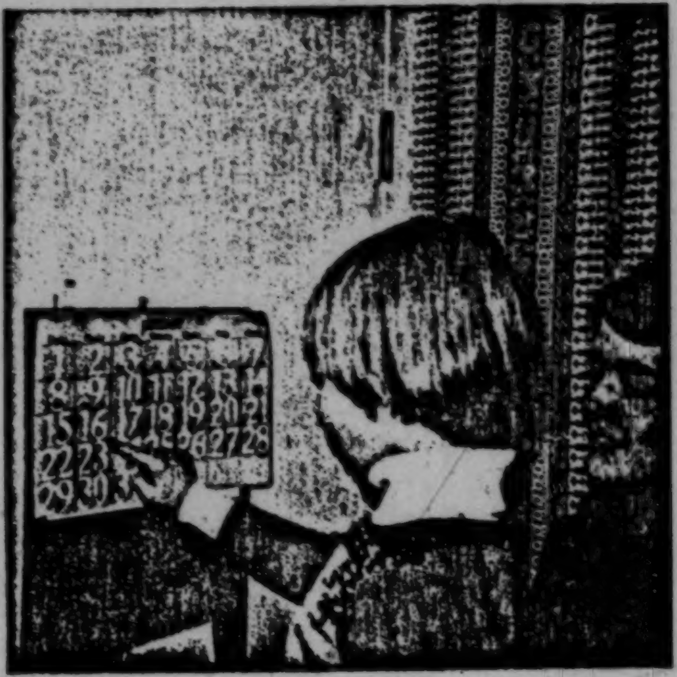
Mother and Jennifer Go Shopping

David B. Doake

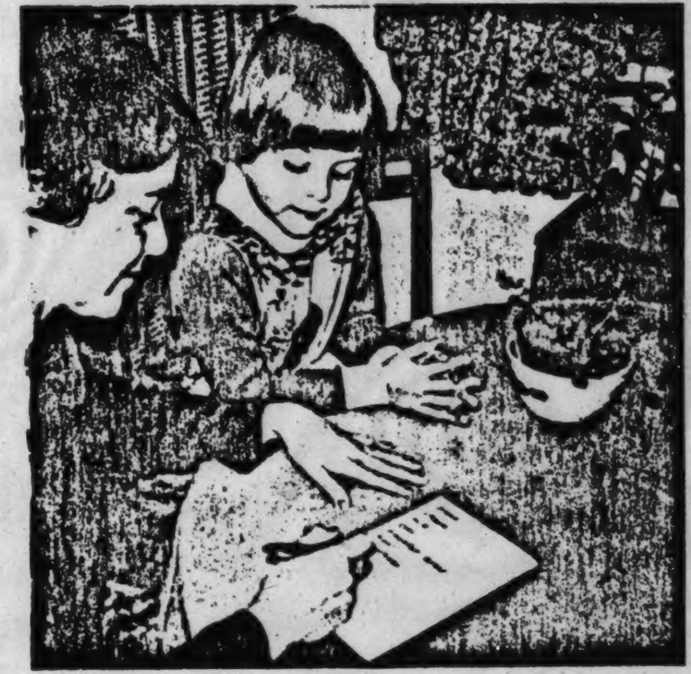
Mother and Jennifer Go Shopping

Written and
illustrated
by
David B. Doake

It is Monday today.
It is the day Mother and Jennifer
go to the supermarket.



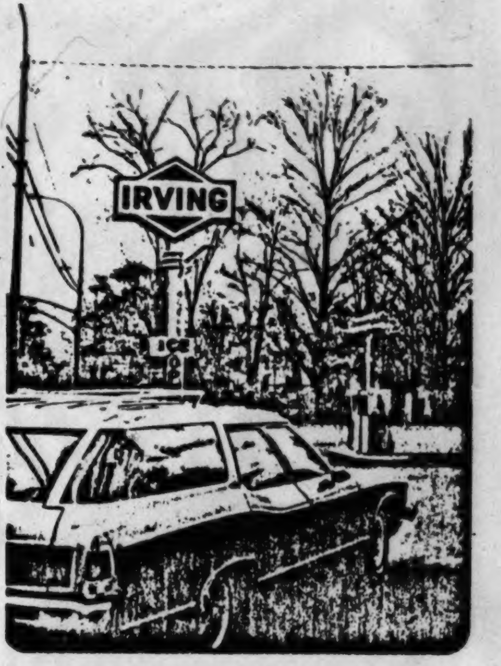
"We need bread, cheese, milk, eggs, breakfast cereal, meat and vegetables", said Mother.



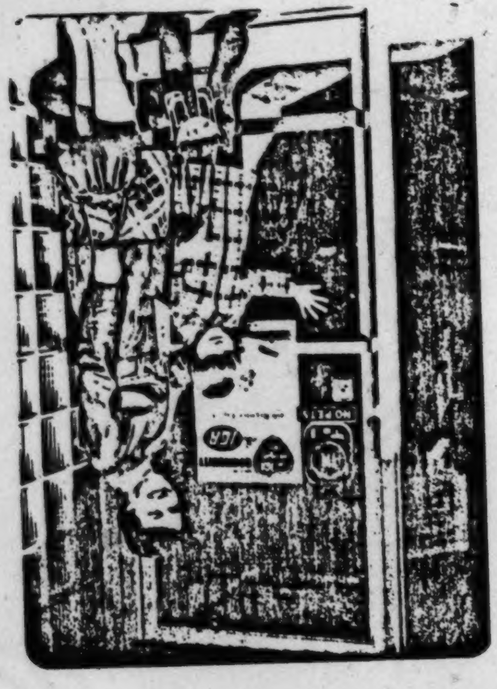
"I would like some vanilla ice cream and some coca cola," said Jennifer. "Yes," smiled Mother, "I'll write that down."

Mother always drives very carefully. She obeys all the road signs. This one says STOP.

Mother always puts the same kind of gas in their car.

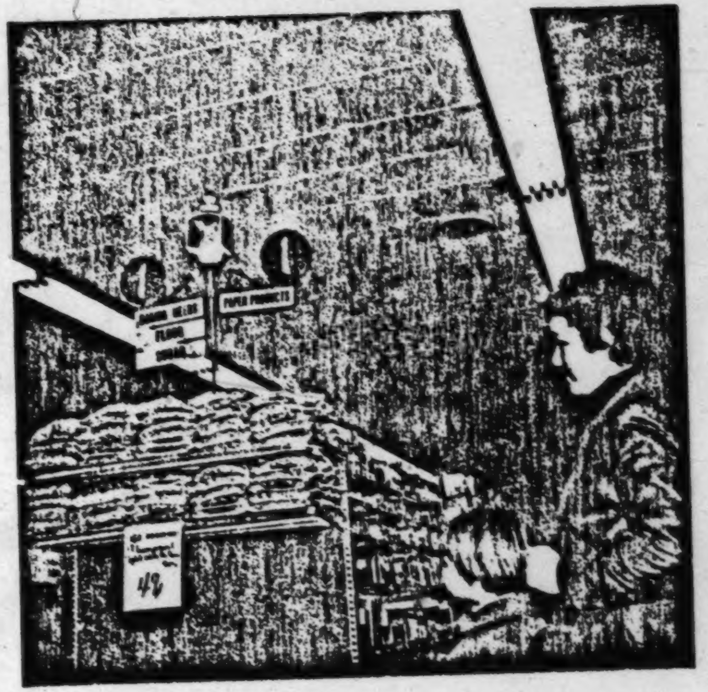


Today they are going to shop at the IGA Foodliner supermarket.

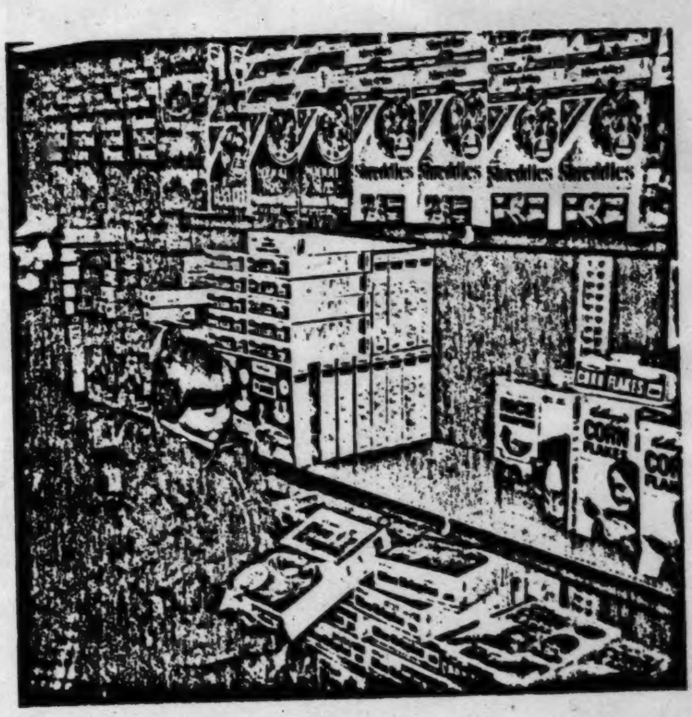


Jennifer and her mother are
careful to go in the IN door.

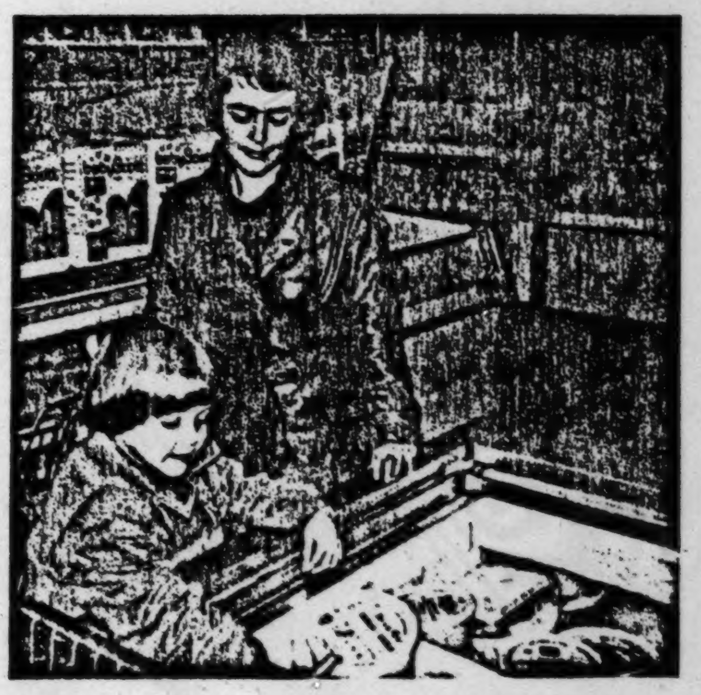
"Where will we start Jennifer?"
asked Mother.
"Let's get the bread first,"
says Jennifer. "I like the
smell of fresh bread."


PAPER PRODUCTS
FLOUR

Jennifer takes her favorite cereal from the shelf.


Shreddies
Shreddies
Shreddies
Shreddies
CORN FLAKES
CORN FLAKES

Jenniferfindsthevanillaicecreaminthefreezer.



She picks up two cans of Coca-Cola from the shelf.

Coke
Coke
Coke

/½†#=& ÷+%‡[¶□□® ©• $!?/

†=#&⅓?:(□® •□%‡[¶!$/?÷+

Rice Krispies

The lady adds up the prices of all the groceries

Jennifer knows which door to go out.

Kellogg's
Rice Krispies

It did not take long to unpack the groceries. Jennifer puts the Rice Krispies in the cupboard.

After putting the groceries away Jennifer goes back to reading her book. This time she reads it to her brother Greg.

APPENDIX F

READING CONCEPTS OBSERVATIONAL SCALE

READING CONCEPTS OBSERVATIONAL SCALE

Instructions.

1. Although the administration of this scale should resemble a normal story reading situation as much as possible, it will probably be necessary to sit at a desk or a table, so that the administrator may record his/her observations in writing. If possible the session should be audiotape recorded as well.
2. The child must sit beside the administrator, on the side opposite from the hand with which the administrator writes.
3. Although the procedure to be followed for the administration of this scale should be considered to be standardized, since the children will usually be very young, the administrator must be flexible enough to alter the procedure should it be seen to be necessary. It may also be necessary and profitable to probe further on certain questions to obtain more information.
4. Care must be taken to establish full rapport with the child and if possible, s/he should have met the administrator on at least one previous occasion.

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
Give the book to the child so that the picture on the front cover can be seen. Purpose: To establish if the child has the word 'book' in his/her vocabulary.	Point to the girl in the picture and say: "This little girl's name is Jennifer. (a)What is she doing?" If the child responds with "Reading" or "Reading a story", say "Yes, that's right. (b)What do we call what she has in her hand?"	(a)"Reading a book" "Reading" "Reading a story" (b) "A book"	
Leave the book in front of the child. Purpose: To establish if the child knows that there are usually words and pictures in a book, and has the word 'word' in his/her vocabulary.	Ask"What is usually inside a book?" Probe if necessary with: "Anything else?"	"Words"; "Pictures" "A story"; "Letters".	
Leave the book in front of the child. Purpose: To establish if the child knows that we read books and has the word 'read' in his/her vocabulary.	If the word 'read' (or 'reading') has not been used by the child ask: "What do we usually do with books?" Probe if necessary.	"Read them"; "Look at them".	
Leave the book in front of the child. Purpose: To establish if the child knows where the title of the book is, and if she/he can read it.	Ask: (a) "Are you able to show me where the name of this book is?"	(a) Points to title.	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
(Cont'd)	(Cont'd) (b) "Do you know what it says?" If the child cannot read it say: "Let me read it for you." Read the title.	(b) Reads the title or indicates that she/he cannot.	
Leave the book in front of the child. Purpose: To establish if the child knows where a story starts in a book.	Say: "I want you to open the book so that we can start reading at the beginning of the story." If the child opens the book to the title page say: "Yes, that's the title of the story, 'Mother and Jennifer Go Shopping'."	Opens the book at the page where the story starts.	
Page 1. If the child has not opened the book at p.1, do so yourself, leaving the book in front of the child. Purpose: To establish if the child knows: 1. Where the first word of a story is. 2. What a calendar is called. 3. What a calendar is used for. 4. What word says Monday. 5. That words and numbers are different.	Say: "I'm going to read this part of the story to you. (a)"Show me where to begin." After reading the sentence ask: (b) "What are Jennifer and Mother looking at?" If the child does not know what a calendar is tell him/her what it is called. Ask: (c) "Why are they looking at the calendar?" (d) "What tells them it was Monday?" (e) "Point to the words on the calendar." (f)"Point to the numbers on the calendar." (Cont'd over)	(a) Points to the first word on the page. (b) "A calendar" (c)"To find what day it is." (d)Points to the word Monday. (e)Points to the words on the calendar. (Cont'd over)	

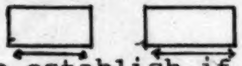
Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
	(Cont'd) (g)"Can you show me with your finger the word that says Monday?" Depending on where the child points, ask: "Can you find it anywhere else?"	(Cont'd) (f)Points to the numbers on the calendar. (g)Points to the word Monday on either the calendar or in the text.	
Pages 3 & 4 Turn to p.3 and ask the first two questions and then read the text. Purpose: To establish if the child understands: 1. The term 'page'. 2. Where the top of a page is. 3. Where the bottom of a page is.	Say:(a)"Show me the top of this page." (b)"Show me the bottom of the page." (c)"What is Mother doing?" Probe but avoid using the word 'write', (e.g. "What is Mother putting on the paper?") (d)"Why is she writing down her shopping list?" or "Why do you think Mother is putting things down on the paper?"	(a)Points to the top or in the area of the top of the page. (b)Points to the bottom or in the area of the bottom of the page. (c)"Writing down her list." (d)"So that she knows what to buy at the supermarket."	
Pages 5 & 6 From this point on ask the child to turn pages. Give her/him time to examine each new picture before reading and asking the questions. (Cont'd over)	Say:(a)"Show me with your finger exactly where I have to begin reading." Read the text slowly and ask: (b)"Where does it say Coca Cola?" (Cont'd over)	(a)Points exactly to the first word on the page. (b)Points to the word in the text or on the shopping list.	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
(Cont'd) Purpose: To establish again if the child: 1. Knows where to start reading on a page. 2. Can recognize the words 'Coca Cola'.	(Cont'd) "Are you able to find where it says Coca Cola anywhere else?"		
Page 7 Do not read the text until the questions have been asked. Purpose: To establish if the child is able to: 1. Recognize the stop sign. 2. Recognize the word 'stop' in the text out of the context of the sign. 3. Indicate the directionality of print across and down the page.	Ask: (a)"What does Mother have to do at this corner?" If the child does not recognize the stop sign point to it and ask: (b)"What is that?" "What does it say?" If the child responds with the word 'stop' ask: (c)"Can you find the word 'stop' anywhere else on the page?" (d)"Show me with your finger which way I go as I read this page." Read the text on p.7 slowly.	(a)"Stop the car". (b)"A stop sign." "Stop." (c)Points to the word 'stop' in the text. (d)Points to the print from left to right across the page and follows it down the page in this answer.	
Page 8 Before reading p.8 ask the first question. Be very careful to read (Cont'd over)	Ask:(a)"Where do I read now?" If the child does not know, indicate where you will read next. (Cont'd over)	(a)Points to the words on p.8. (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
(Cont'd) slowly so that the child has a chance to "eye-ear-voice" match with his/her finger. Purpose: To establish if the child knows: 1. That the story goes from the page on the left to the one on the right. 2. How to eye-ear-voice match as material is read. 3. A gas station sign. 4. Any other signs around the gas station.	(Cont'd) Then say:(b)"You point to the story as I read it." Read the text and ask: (c)"What tells Mother which is the gas station she has to go to?" (d)"What does the sign say?" (e)"Do you know what any of the other signs in the picture tell us?"	(Cont'd) (b)Points exactly to words as they are said. (c)Points to the Irving sign. (d)Irving (e)Says the words for any of the other signs in the picture.	
Pages 9 & 10 Before reading discuss the name of the supermarket and make an explanation if it is not one that the child is familiar with. Purpose: To establish if the child: 1. Is able to use the term 'letters'. 2. Knows any letter names for upper case letters.	Read the text and then point with a pencil to the letters in IGA. Ask:(a)"What do we call these?" Depending on the response the child makes ask: (d)"Do you know the names of any of the letters?" or "What do we call 'I', 'G', 'A' and so on?" If the child does not use the term 'letters' or give their names say: "We call these letters."	(a)'Letters' (b)Gives the names of the letters.	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
Pages 9 & 10 Leave the book open at the same page. Use a pointer to indicate the letters. Purpose: To establish if the child knows that letters have upper and lower case forms.	If the child knows the names of the letters say:"Find me another 'I'." Repeat this with two other letters. (G & A) If the child does not know the names of the letters say:"This is a letter 'I'. Find me another 'I'." Repeat for G & A.	Points to the equivalent lower case letters. Points to the equivalent lower case letters.	
Pages 11 & 12 Allow the child time to inspect p.11. Purpose: To establish if the child recognizes that print has a right and wrong way up.	Point to p.11 and ask: (a)"Is there anything different on this page?" If the child responds that the words are upside down say: (b)"Show me how you would put them up the right way." With the print upside down say: (c)"You point to the words as I read them." Read the text,	(a)"The words (or letters)are upside down." (b) Turns the book upside down. (c)Points to the words from right to left across the bottom line and then the top line.	
Page 12 Transfer the child's attention to the picture on p. 12. Purpose: To establish if the child is: (Cont'd over)	Ask:(a)"How do Mother and Jennifer know which door to use?" Depending on the child's response say: (Cont'd over)	(a)Points to the word 'IN' or says: "The sign on the door tells them." (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible responses	Responses
(Cont'd) 1. Aware of the signs on the door. 2. Able to recognize the word 'IN'.	(Cont'd) (b)"Show me where it says 'IN'."	(Cont'd) (b)Points to the word 'IN' on the door.	
Pages 13 & 14 Read the text. Purpose:To establish if the child knows: 1. The labels for punctuation marks,(question, period, quotation). 2. The purpose for the punctuation marks. 3. That the supermarket has directional signs. 4. What these signs say.	Read the text. Point to the question mark and ask: (a)"What is this?" (b)"What is it used for?" Point to the period and ask the same questions. Point to the quotation marks and ask: (c)"What are these?" (d)"What are they used for?" (e), (f) (Quotation mark) Point to the picture and ask: (g)"How do Mother and Jennifer know where to go in the supermarket to find their groceries?" If the child points to the signs ask: (h)"What do they say?"	(a)"A question mark." (b)"It shows when people ask a question." (c)"A period." (d)"It tells us when a sentence is ended." (e)"They are quotation marks." (f)"They tell us when someone is speaking." Points to the signs or says: (g)"The signs tell them." (h)Says what the signs say.	
Pages 15 & 16 Read the text. Purpose:To establish if the child knows: 1. That we can recognize food packages (Cont'd over)	Read the text and ask: "What is Jennifer doing?" (a)"How does she know which is the cereal she wants?" (Cont'd over)	"Choosing her cereal." (a)Points to the name of the cereal and/or says: (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible responses	Responses
(Cont'd) by the words that are on them. 2. The names of any cereals on the packages.	(Cont'd) (b)"What is the name of her cereal?" (c)"Can you tell me any of the other cereal names? Point to them as you say them?"	(Cont'd) "Because the name tells her." (b)Rice Krispies." (c)Says some of the names and points to them.	
Page 15 Take two pieces of cardboard approximately 3 inches by 2 inches. Demonstrate how to use the two pieces of cardboard as "curtains" to close and open over the "window". Have the child use them.  Purpose:To establish if the child can separate letters from words.	After the child knows how to slide the "curtains" open and closed say: (a)"Close the curtains over the story on this page until you can see just ONE LETTER." (b)"Now just TWO LETTERS."	(a)Moves the curtains to show one letter. (b)Shows two letters.	
Page 16 Continue using the two "curtains". Purpose:To establish if the child knows: 1. What a word is. 2. Where the first letter of a word is. 3. Where the last letter of a word is.	Open the curtains and say: (a)"Now close the curtains until you can see just ONE WORD." Open the "curtains" again and say: (b)"Now close the curtains until you can see just TWO WORDS." Open the "curtains" again and say: (Cont'd over)	(a)Moves the "curtains" to show one word. (b)Shows two words. (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
	(Cont'd) (c)"Show me the First letter of a word." Open the "curtains again and say: (d)"Show me the LAST letter of a word."	(Cont'd) (c)Shows the first letter of a word. (d)Shows the last letter of a word.	
Pages 17 & 18 Allow time for the child to inspect p.17. Purpose:To establish if the child knows: 1. That words are separated by spaces. 2. That we can identify food packages by the words on the labels.	Say:"Look at the story on the page as I read it." Read the text and ask: (a)"Is there anything different on this page?" Say:"Look at the picture now. (b)How does Jennifer know which is the vanilla ice cream?" Depending on the response ask: (c)"Can you show me where it says vanilla ice cream?"	(a)"There are no spaces between the words." (b)"She can read the words on the label." (c)Points to the words on the carton or to the words in text.	
Pages 19 & 20 Read the text. Purpose:To establish if the child knows: 1. The difference between one word and two. 2. The words Coca Cola and/or Coke.	Read the text and ask: (a)"Can you find the words that say Coca Cola?" (b)"Can you find the word that says Coke?" If the child points to the words in the picture for Coca Cola ask if s/he can find it anywhere else.	(a)Points to the words on the can or in the text. (b)Points to the word on the can. As above.	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
Pages 21 & 22 Read the text. Purpose: To establish if the child knows the difference between scribble and words.	Read the text and ask. (a)"Do you notice anything different on this page?" Point to p.21. (b)"Are there any words on the page? Point to them please."	(a)There are no words on the page." (b)Says that there are and points to the words at the bottom of the page.	
Page 23 Read the text. Purpose: To establish if the child is: 1. Aware of the funtional nature of signs. 2. Able to recognize the word 'out'.	Read the text and ask: (a)"How does Jennifer know which door to go out?" (b)"Can you find the word 'out'?" (c)"Can you find it anywhere else?"	Says something to the effect of: (a)"The sign on the door tells her." (b)Points to the word on the door or on the page. (c)As above.	
Page 24 Read the text. Purpose: To establish if the child knows the concepts of "first" and "last".	Read the text and say: (a)"Show me the first word in this part of the story." (b)"Show me the last word in this part of the story."	(a)Points to 'It'. (b)Points to 'cupboard'.	
Page 25 Read the text slowly. Purpose: To check again if the child knows how to eye-ear-voice match. To establish if the child knows: (Cont'd over)	Say: (a)"You point to the words as I read them." Read the text slowly. Ask: (b)"Why do you think Jennifer is reading to her brother?" (Cont'd over)	(a)Points to each word as it is read. (b)"Because he can't read yet." or "The book is too hard for him." (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
(Cont'd) 1. Some of the tasks involved in learning to read. 2. That to read you must be able to see the print on the page.	(Cont'd) Say:(c)"If her brother could not read,what do you think he would have to do to learn how to?" Probe if necessary. Ask:(a)"Could Jennifer read her book with her eyes closed?" Probe for reasons whether the child answers "Yes" or "No". (b)"Could she read her book with it closed?" Probe for reasons whether the child answers "Yes" or "No".	(Cont'd) (c)He has to learn what the words say. A variety of responses may be obtained here. (a)"No." "Because she couldn't see the words." (b)"No." "Because she couldn't see the words."	
Close the book and leave it face downwards on the table. Purpose:To discover if the child is able to draw conclusions from a story.	Ask: (a)"How was Jennifer able to help her mother with the grocery shopping?" Probe if necessary with "Yes. Any other way."	(a)"Helped her make up the list." "Helped her find the groceries in the supermarket." "Kept her company." A variety of responses may be obtained here.	
Give the book to the child with it upright and the spine towards him/her. Purpose:To establish if the child knows where: (Cont'd over)	Say: (a)"Show me the front of the book." (b)"Show me the back of the book." (c)"Show me the beginning of the story." (Cont'd over)	(a)Points to the front cover. (b)Points to the back cover. (c)Points to the first sentence in the story. (Cont'd over)	

Administration	Instructions	Possible Responses	Responses
1. The front and the back of a book is. 2. The beginning and the ending of the story is.	(d)"Show me the end of the story."	(d)Points to the last sentence in the story.	
Turn to the title page. Purpose:To establish if the child knows that books are written by people.	Read the title and "by David B. Doake," and ask "What does "by David B. Doake" mean?"	"He wrote the book."	
Remove the book from the child's presence. Give the child some paper and a pencil. Purpose:To establish if the child has developed a written vocabulary.	Say:"I would like to see if you can print some words. Print any words that you know on this paper." If the child cannot write any words ask for letters.	Writes whatever words he/she knows.	